











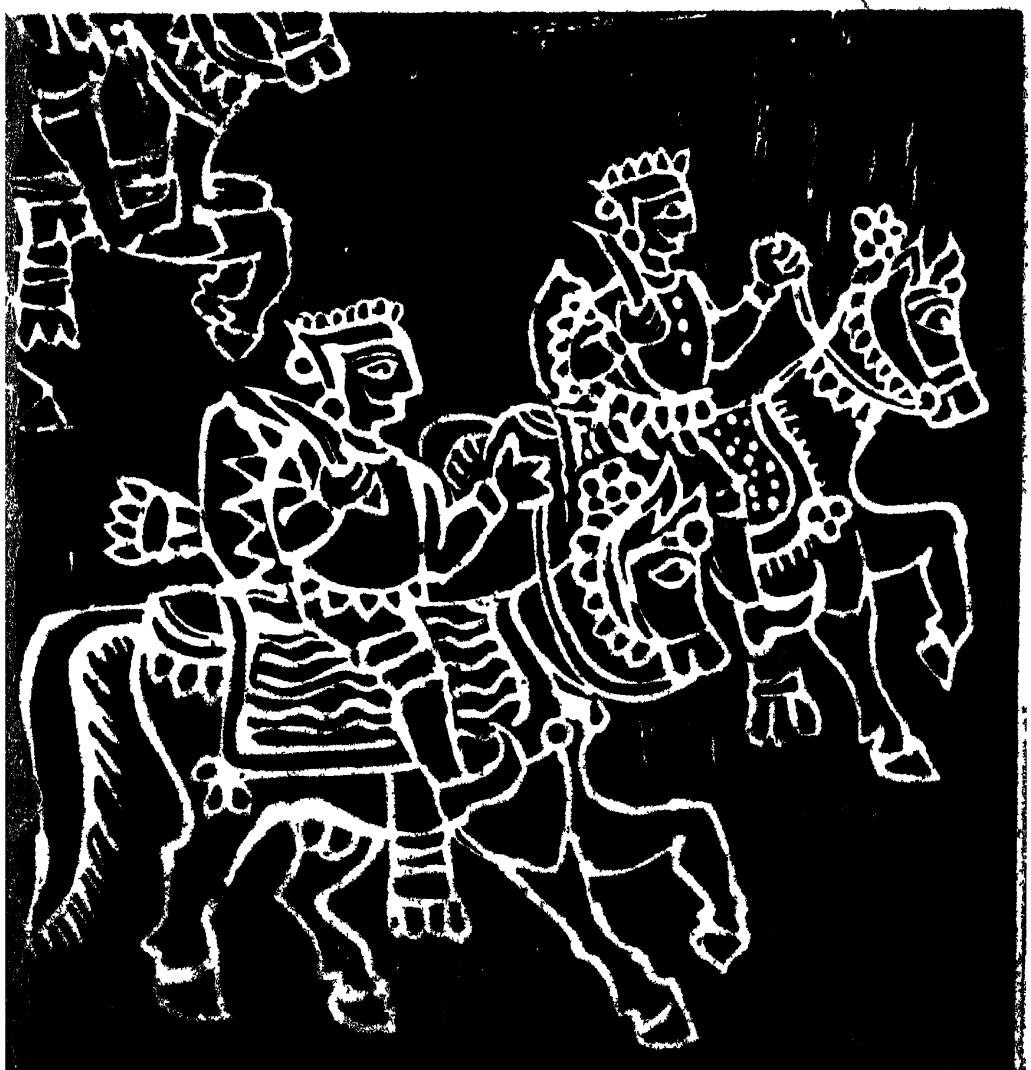


# FOLKLORE

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# FOLKLORE

January 1970

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SUBHOBROTA ROY CHAUDHURI

## CHRISTMAS LEGENDS AND FOLKLORE

To the people December had been the most favourable month of the year. Christ, the Light of the world, at this time born once more in the hearts of men, said Christian priests later in the world's history. And hearts of men, said Christian priests later in the world's history. And to rejoice and make merry.

OUR BEST WISHES FOR A HAPPY  
AND PROSPERS AS NEW YEAR TO ALL

**The Legends of St. Nicholas:** Nicholas, who lived in the fourth century A.D. is regarded as the patron Saint of travellers on the ocean and of children. One of the stories about him says, that he saved some sailors from shipwreck by the favour and efficiency of his prayers, and that he still keeps guard over all who voyage by sea from his place, in the heavenly kingdom. The giving of Christmas presents probably owes to the origin to St. Nicholas, and also the hanging up of stockings to receive them, for these things were once done on December the Sixth, not on Christmas Day, and they were done in memory of one of the actions thought to have been performed by the Saint.

The feast of St. Nicholas was brought into disrepute in the middle ages by the rioting and irreverence that attended the election of the Boy Bishops, who were chosen on that day. The boy Bishop does his church service from December the Sixth to Holy Innocent's Day. He was even allowed to give blessings and to assist with Mass. At first the rule of Boy Bishop seems to have been carried out with soberness and sincerity and it was put to an end in the reign of Henry viii.

The children rebelled at being deprived of the fun, and of the many valuable gifts that were showered upon them. And the parents, then as now inclined to spoil their offspring, gradually adopted the habit of giving them presents at Christmas instead.

**Evil Protection by Mistle Toe:** Mistle is, in some ways, the most interesting of all the evergreens which we use for Christmas decorations. Its use at the winter festival goes far back into the past, before the birth of Christ, perhaps even before the events recorded in the Old Testament history. It was the sacred plant of the Druids and the practise of kissing beneath it is thought to be derived from an ancient Druid rite. At the winter Solstice, the Druid priests, followed by their people, went out in procession to some tree on which mistletoe grew, and with an especially consecrated sickle -- said to have been made of gold -- cut sprays from the plants. A bull -- sometimes a human being -- was sacrificed beneath the tree from which the mistle toe had been taken, after which the sprays, having been blessed by the Head Druid, were just distributed to the people, who carried them reverently back to their dwellings, and kept them to protect themselves from evil during the coming year.

**The Cattle on the Christmas Eve:** According to the information received from the British folklore and the folklore from other countries, we know that on the night of Christ's birth the dumb creatures realized the holiness of the time and joined with man in worship of the heavenly child. Cattle it was said, knelt in their stalls at midnight, bees stirred and murmured in their winter sleep within their lives, and cocks crew at intervals all night long, to scare any power of darkness that might be hovering around. References to these beliefs are to be found in the English literature. One of the best known comes in Shakespeare's play, where ghost of Hamlet's father, says :

Some says that ever 'gainst the season comes  
Where in our Saviour's birth is celebrated.  
The bird of dawning singeth all night long.  
And then, then say, no spirit can walk abroad,  
The nights are wholesome ; then no planet's shrike,  
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm ;  
So hollow'd and so gracious is the time.

**The Yule Log :** In the past one of the great events of Christmas Eve was the bringing in the lighting of the Yule Log, without which Christmas was not Christmas in our forefather's time. The ceremony goes back to the log, forgotten days, when the old Northmen worshipped Odir and Balder, and much superstition was attached to the burning. The log was

not to be lighted until dusk on Christmas Eve. Enough of the log must be saved to burn again at candlemas, and a small piece kept, as well to start the Yule fire again in a year's time. And those who actually laid the fires and set light to them must be sure to wash their hands well before doing so. That was very important part of the ceremony, for, as before doing so.

**Christmas Fare :** A few hundred year's ago, feast on Christmas Day began with a boar's head. When that was eaten, it would be followed by peacocks, chickens, pheasants, swans, vensiors, usually served with frumenty, a broth made with milk, flour, almonds, and the yolks of eggs. Those all disposed of mince pies would be brought in and a connection known as plum porridge, which has now grown solid and become our plum pudding.

**The Bells of New Year's Eve :** In our medieval times Christmas used to be celebrated for 12 days with boisterous, pomb and mirth along with heavy feeling and drinking. A person used to called for making practical jokes which used to make an emotional romantic out burst of laughter. And to-day, as now, romantically minded men and women thought of the old year as a dying person and paused in their revels to toll the bells for its passing and also to maintain and bygone traditions.

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## ACTUALITY OF ROMANIAN FOLKLORE

### I

Sometime ago, Marcel Cellier, an authority on the folklore of Central and South-East Europe, a well-known collector and recorder of wonderful streophonic discs of Romanian folk music, issued by the Philips company, told me that, from an experience of several years he inferred that among all European folk musics, Romanian folk music is the most accessible to the modern taste.

In relating traditional folk music to the taste of the modern man, the Swiss folklorist in fact took up a particularly interesting problem, the confrontation of the values of traditional culture with the culture of the modern industrial society, the chances of some of them to coexist with it, by the quality of getting integrated into contemporary culture. When viewed in its generality, the process is extremely complex and the problems it brings forward seem to be insoluble. But when viewed in its component elements, in the immediate correlations between these elements, it gets chances of being understood. First of all commanding attention is the ascertainment that in the stratifications of the taste in the modern industrial society noticeable in certain conditions and perhaps also from a certain age is an increasing interest for the values of traditional culture, for folklore. This interest goes primarily towards the authentical folkloric forms, hence towards the folklore of those countries where these forms are still vital. They further go towards the contemporary folk achievements of these authentical traditional forms.

### II

Stemming from the ancient Thraco-Dacian culture which the antiquity mentioned many a time, and grafted with elements of Roman culture in its blooming epoch, when this culture had agglutinated many elements of the primary stock of East-Mediterranean culture, folk culture has been developing without hiatuses to this day. Hence, it has an history of more than one and a half millenium in the places where the Romanian people live also nowadays. In this span of time, the life of the people, their behaviour,—their customs—and their artistic productions pass from the context of the village communities of the principal-

ties and voivodships, to the subsequent state forms and to the unitary national state today.

In this long process the Romanian people takes over and melts in the retort of its creative spirit elements from the Byzantine or Latin-Medieval cultures, from the cultures of the neighbour Slav peoples, from the Turkish-Arabic or Western Renaissance cultures, from what we generally term modern culture. Situated between the west and the east, it succeeds in providing as an original synthesis—resting on its own culture and its creative spirit—the Romanian folk culture.

But beyond the historical data which justify the present-day interest in the Romanian folklore, stands the vivid reality of the actual wealth and diversity of this folklore that strikes not only folklore enthusiasts and tourists but also the most demanding experts.

Without attempting to give a general description I would like to single out a few facts of this wealth and diversity.

### III

Among the customs of family life, the wedding, which in the villages and sometimes also in the towns of Romania proceeds on traditional lines, is an ample ritual and a picturesque spectacle. Having a unitary pattern this ritual involves, however, distinct forms of certain episodes, also different dresses and songs and dances that lead to regional specifics. This focus of the wedding ritual today is the symbol of the dispute between the two families. This dispute, which was probably real in olden times, is illustrated in the Romanian folklore by a long allegorical poem which tells the story of “emperor” bridegroom going a-hunting and at the well, meeting a “roe deer”, the bride, whom he tracks to her parents’ home. Here, his envoys describe the bride as a flower that in the parents’ garden “does neither burgeon nor bear fruit” and needs transplanting in the bridegroom’s garden to blossom to the full.

Special episodes are in perfect correspondence with the theory of rites elaborated by A. van Gennep, the bridegroom’s separation from the lads’ group and the bride’s from the lassies’ group. The two groups accompany the bride and bridegroom throughout the ritual. Outstanding in the lads’ group is “brădarul” or “stegarul”, according to the region’s tradition prescribing that the procession carry an adorned fir-tree or a banner consisting of cashmere kerchiefs, ribbons and little bells. The bride’s separation from her father’s house is marked by a ceremonial song with idyllic tones alternating with aching lyricism.

Like in all the important rituals, the union between the two families is sanctioned by an ample wedding banquet at which, the same as in the Middle Ages at the court banquets, heroic epics are still being sung. The

integration of the bride, who is the central personage of the ceremony, into her new status of wife is illustrated by a change in the ceremonial dress and especially by altering the headdress—the coronet replaced by a kerchief.

In the system of family structure, the wedding establishes new kinship not only between two families but also between these families and those who initiated the bride and bridegroom in the ceremonial, the godfather and the godmother. This sponsorship kinship is marked throughout the country by great banquets in particular days of the year when the sponsors decide to bring together their godchildren who come accompanied by a train, and sometimes noted sponsors have dozens of godchildren coming to such banquets.

#### IV

Among the traditions preserved in Transylvania are two that mark the beginning and end of agricultural works: the one celebrating the first furrow, and the harvesting tradition—that of the coronet. On Palm Sunday the group of lads chooses its leader—the one who came out first with the plough in the field—chair him through the village and confer on him ~~the~~ the right to judge them for any negligence in the spring operations.

At the close of harvesting, the group of reapers, boys and girls make a coronet of ears and carry it with pomp and in songs to the house of the host. The coronet is sprinkled with water and solemnly handed over for safekeeping in prominence. The ears have magic virtues and are inserted in the wedding coronet. In the light of the same magic logic, the grain is meant to fertilize the ensuing year's seed.

The New Year is celebrated with great pomp in all Romanian villages and towns. In their traditional pattern, the New Year celebrations marking the passage from one vegetation period to another vegetation period, proceed for twelve days. They start on Christmas Eve and last until Epiphany. The content of these celebrations is pre-eminently, lay, and its significance is passage to and good omens for the incoming year. During the New Year celebrations, groups of children go well-wishing about the village, and groups of lads go from house to house wishing, in artful allegoric verses, happiness, and a tranquil and prosperous life to the host, his wife and children, the prospective bride or bridegroom, etc.

The good wishes for farmers are contained in the special and long allegorical poem "Plaugusorul" which in a poetical but at the same time witty description relates the technique of farm operations from the first furrow to bread-baking. Plugusorul is not only a well-wishing poem but also by its construction a brief versified treatise of particular agrotechny.

## V

The Romanian folklore generally does not know of the carnival in the sense and at the date of its occurrence in the west. In exchange, the New Year's celebrations are occasions for an ample display of mask amusements. These amusements count miscellaneous masks, from symbolic representations of animals to personages specific to various trades, to certain peoples and certain contemporary situations. The procession of masks covers a wide range individually or more often in couples: men masked as brids, goats, camels, the bear and the bear leader, the bride and the bridegroom, the outgoing and the incoming year, etc.

People in some places have preserved a tradition, like in Roman New Year customs, of horse races ("incurcarea cailor").

## VI

Viewed from the angle of the spectacle, besides that of traditions from which we have mentioned only a few, also noteworthy are the dances. In very many villages, there is the tradition, like in the old days, of the Sunday afternoon dance. The hora, or "jocul" as this dancing is termed, is an event in which all the village takes part, the youngsters for the dance, the married women and especially the mothers to watch and comment, and the men to chat and discuss community affairs. The typological variety of the Roman folk dances is very ample both vertically in the context of the all-country repertory and also vertically in the repertory of a single village. Oltenia counts villages that have preserved over 40 dances in their repertories.

## VII

Worthy of note are also the diversified folk instruments. The Romanian people has created a wide range of instruments. The range of folk music instruments goes from pseudo-instruments like the pear leave or the birch bark, and fish scale, up to the accordion and saxophone today. Among the wind instruments are about 15 kinds of pipes, 5 kinds of alphorns, clarinet and so on. Worth mentioning among the string instruments are the dulcimer, folk guitar, fiddle, etc.

The widest spread of these instruments is certainly the pipe. Everyone can make a pipe with a certain degree of sonority. But top-quality pipes are made by artists with long practice. Some of them have attained veritable manufacturing standards. The Hodac village, of Reghin district, Transylvania, is noted for its pipes—10,000 manufactured every year and sold all over the country.

The doina (a nostalgic folk song) is today considered as a specific genre of the Romanian folklore. But developing parallel to the doina and sometimes steaming direct from it in the Middle Ages and in the modern period is the lyrical song proper: the love song, the fate song and the chance song, the estrangement song, the songs of social protest, etc. The Romanian lyrical song has a regional melodic variety that resembles the one I mentioned above.

## VIII

These were only a few aspects of the Romanian folklore. Discussing of all categories and detailing of all aspects is difficult. I hope, nevertheless, that these few remarks on Romanian folklore will arouse the interest of enthusiasts and experts. Through acquaintance with the Romanian folklore not only leads to delving into the history of European culture but can also help formulate hypotheses as to the ways of integrating the folklore into contemporary culture.

*Director of the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore, Academy of Sciences, Bucharest.*

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PURNIMA SINHA

## FOLK CLASSICAL CONTINUUM IN INDIAN MUSIC

*(Continued from December, 1969)*

### Discussion :

The information obtained from the analysis of the songs may now be summed up.

For convenience of classification, the principal features of the melodic characteristics of the sixteen specimens of songs have been presented in compact form in Table 18. We shall introduce the terms 'class basis' or simply 'basis' for dominant Matrika, or the set of four pivotal notes on which the melodic structure is built, and 'Class configuration' for the complete set of Matrikas present in a song.

On a first glance at the Table, we may tend to divide the specimens of songs into three classes on the basis of the nature of the dominant *Matrika*. Without bothering about assigning names corresponding to *Raga* classes we can suppose the songs to belong to the following basic categories (i) SGPD (ii) SRMD (iii) SGMD. According to this classification seven songs would belong to class (i) one song to class (ii) (Specimen 9), and six songs to class (iii). From this classification, specimen (9) may seem to be somewhat disconnected and unrelated to the common trend of melodic development in the region. But if we follow the gradual addition of the Matrikas in the samples arranged in order of complexity, we notice that the samples represented by the class bases (a), (b) and (e) are interrelated and it may also appear that one class is evolved from the other in a process of creative experimentation at producing variety in the compositions. The most interesting thing to observe is the tendency of remaining within the framework of some rigid rules while gradually adapting different variations in the framework. The variations are not made in a haphazard manner.

If we start from specimen 1 which is in a rudimentary stage of melodic development we notice a tendency of forming the Matrika (a) SGPD. The tendency persists and develops further in specimen (2). In specimen (3) an additional Khandameru MDS appears. A second Matrika SRMD appears in specimen (4) keeping SGPD in dominant position. In

specimen (5) a trend toward (b) moving to the dominant position is also indicated. A tendency to bring in the Matrika (c) RMPn is also inherent in a composition. In specimen (6) the class configuration (a), (b), (c) becomes distinct, stabilising the trend indicated in the previous specimens. Let us name the class configuration containing the elements (Matrikas), a, b and c as X, and the particular sequence a, b, c as Xabc. In this specimen again the third Matrika (c) tends to go up like (b) in specimen 2. In specimen (7) the class configuration of (6) is maintained but there is a hidden tendency of the class basis to move to (e).

In specimen (8) the class configuration is (Xabc, d) containing elements a, b, c and d. Let us name this set as Y, and the particular sequence a, b, c, d as Y<sub>1</sub>.

In specimen (9) the class configuration also consist of the set Y, but the sequence Z<sup>abc</sup> is changed to X<sup>bca</sup> forming the set {b, c, a, d}. This particular sequence may be termed as Y<sub>2</sub>. The class configuration Y<sub>1</sub> and Y<sub>2</sub> are generated as a result of permutation of position of a set of three Matrikas. Other combinations of positions have not been exploited so far. It may be said that the tendency of the *Matrikas* (b) and (c) to occupy higher position indicated in the previous specimens is fulfilled in specimen (9).

The specimens 1 to 9, representatives of the forms *Sarhul*, *Karam*, *Danr Saila* and *Tusu* exhaust the principal varieties of tunes that have been developed within these forms. In all other songs the same tunes with minor embellishments are used with different word themes.

But the firm *Nachni Saila* provides a field for somewhat more free creative expression of the individual artist. Among the six specimens of *Nachni Saila* analysed so far, one sample (10) uses the class basis (a) and the class configuration Xabc, which is common to *Karam*, *Danr Saila* and a part of *Tusu* forms. Four samples develop the class configuration (e, f) in a stable form. In one sample (15) the configuration become (e, f, d) with (d) as a minor inclusion. Specimen (16) representing the form *Khyapar Dhua* also has the class configuration (e, f). The rhythmic setting of specimen (14) is 4/4, which is different from that of all other forms developed in the area. It is probable that this form is of outside origin and has been adapted to the general pattern of songs in the locality.

The class basis (a) and the class structure X shared by most of the popular traditional forms present in the area may be the older class developed in the area. But most of the songs composed with the configuration X in *Karam* and *Tusu* forms are confusing as regards assignment of class basis due to a lack of correspondence between the position and the value of the set of characteristic *Matrikas*. Also, the class X did not attain a stable shape in the innovations of *Nachni Saila* specimens studied so far. Although sample (10) is based on this class, there is a tendency in the

composition to move to the class Z which is found to be more commonly used in *Nachni Saila*. The specimen (10) is provisionally categorised as a transitional sample between class X and Z. But it is quite possible that other compositions may be found in which class X would be developed more strongly, for which base is created in sample (10). The nature of indecision in sample (10) cannot be compared with that of sample (5), where attempt at variety was made within a fragment of a scale. In (10), the creative artist is experimenting with variety of emphasis within the span of a full-fledged well established scale. There is a large number of choice between emphasising several explicit *Khandameras*. The musical quality of (10) is in no way inferior to that of the stable sample (14). The samples 11 to 14 have gradually developed the class Z to a stable form. As we proceed toward 14, the relation with X becomes more remote and Z becomes more stable. Without being trained to remain within a restricted set of rules, in the process of creating variety, a rule has spontaneously been developed and stabilised in these samples. In sample (13) again, there is an attempt at extending the scale (13) and (14), belong to class Z but also has some affinity to X.

The process of evolution of the scale as revealed from the study of the songs ranging from the primitive tribal *Sarhul* songs to *Nachni Saila*, the cultivated form of songs, corroborates the proposition of Sanyal (Sanyal 1959: 258) on evolution of scale derived from interpretation of ancient texts and study of classical music. The process observed in the particular songs of Barabhum is described below.

We observe that the particular scale developed in the area evolved by gradual accumulation of notes following the rule that the appearance of one note tends to bring in, with preferential emphasis in terms of duration, those notes generated by operations of 3rd (mediance) and operations of 4th and 5th (consonance) of the note Fig. 1 shows the various theoretically possible notes that tend to come with the appearance of S, following the rule stated above.

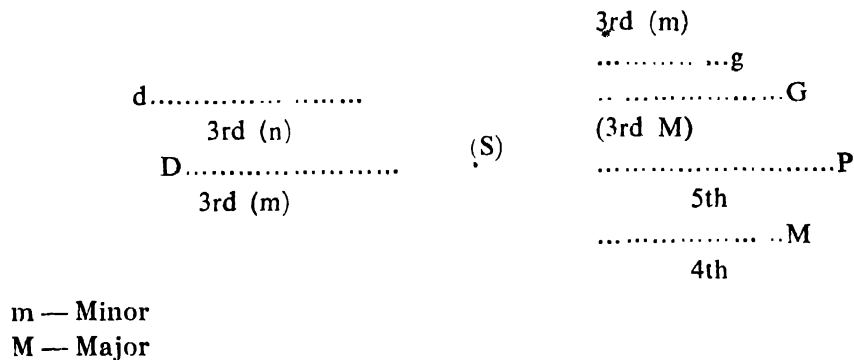


Fig. 1



The process of development of the particular scale to which the songs described in this chapter belong to as follows :

- Step 1 :** The fundamental S appears with a strong G and a feeble R in terms of duration (a tendency to bring in P and D consonant to S and G respectively, is predicted (Specimen 1)).
- Step 2 :** The note 'D' appears in addition to SRG, R is feeble. 'P' is again a latent note. (Specimen 2).
- Step 3 :** SRGPD and a touch of M appears. The strength of RM being comparatively weak
- Step 4 :** The mediant pairs SG and RM appears, SG having greater value. The strength of RM is comparatively greater than that of the previous sample. A tendency to bring P and D is predicted (Specimen 4).
- Step 5 :** Both the pairs SG and RM gains strength in terms of duration. In addition to note P and n, consonant to M, is predicted.
- Step 6 :** The notes SRGMPDn appear (Specimen 6).
- Step 7 :** The note 'g' appears in addition to SRGMPDn. (Specimen 8).
- Step 8 :** The note 'd' is touched (Specimen 10).

This covers the whole range of notes used in all the songs.

The set of notes which gradually became prominent (in terms of duration) is in a way similar to the series of overtones generated by plucking or striking of a string tuned to a fundamental note.

In the set ultimately formed, all the notes have their proper partners related by mediance and consonance. Thus, the notes that are notes obtained from operation of 3rd and 5th or 4th on the 1st note, related by mediance and consonance, satisfied, have gradually appeared and became stabilised.

The scale can be considered to be built up by several sets of three notes obtained from operation of 3rd and 5th or 4th on the first note. Such a combination of three notes the *Khandamerus* have successive notes related by alternate major and minor third

e. g. (i)  $\frac{S}{3(M)} \text{ --- } \frac{G}{3(m)} \text{ --- } P$ , (ii)  $\frac{D}{3(m)} \text{ --- } \frac{S}{3M} \text{ --- } G$

and so on.

In the scale described above eight *Khandamerus* have been used. All the mediant pairs contributed to form two *Khandamerus*. Only one possibility has not been exploited. The pair GP forms the *Khandameru* SGP, but not GPN, due to the absence of the note N.

### A pair of complimentary Khandamerus

(D)  $\frac{\text{S}}{(m) \text{ 3rd}}$   $\frac{\text{G, S}}{(M) \text{ 3rd}}$   $\frac{\text{G}}{(M) \text{ 3rd}}$  (P)  
 $\frac{\text{S}}{3 (M)}$   $\frac{\text{G}}{3 (m)}$   $\frac{\text{M}}{3 (M)}$   $\frac{\text{D}}{3 (M)}$

may be coupled to form a *Matrika*, where the successive four notes are related by alternate major and minor third e.g.

S  $\frac{\text{G}}{3 (M)}$  M  $\frac{\text{D}}{3 (M)}$

All the compositions remain within a group with the predominance of two basic set of *Matrikas* X—(a, b, c) and Z—(e, f). In different compositions individual values of the elements a, b, c or e, f changed and in one case the position (sequence in terms of value) changed.

A composition showing a set of *Matrikas* evolved from the rules stated above have characteristics of one or other *Raga* groups. It seems that interchange of position of such a set of *Matrika* without disturbing the constituent notes may produce different classes within the group.

The two sets X and Z generated from the same set of *Khandamerus* are also related and may be supposed to form sub-groups of the same group. The set X appears when the value of the *Khandameru* SGP is greater than that of MDS, and Z appears in the reverse case.

The configuration of a group may be represented by a model of coloured discs distributed in numbered boxes in the following way :

- (1) The number of the box corresponds to the position (1, 2, 3 etc.) of the *Matrikas*.
- (2) Area of the disc correspond to the total value of all the notes.
- (3) Colour Scheme of the disc represent the composition of *Matrika*. Each note may be assigned a colour and the disc may be divided into four coloured sectors corresponding to the colours of the notes forming the *Matrika*. Area of a Sector corresponding to a note may be made to represent percentage value of the particular note in the total value of all the notes.

Thus the coloured area in the disc is proportional to the value of the *Matrika*.

In general, higher value is associated with higher position, but exception may also occur.

In case of different compositions belonging to the same class only area of the sectors and the discs varies. Permutation of the discs between different positions generate new classes.

All the samples of songs studied belong to either of the subgroups X—(a, b, c) or Z(e, f). Elements of X and Z do not mix. Element 'd' can enter either set X or Z. For a particular sample

If  $GP > MD$      ...     Sample belongs to X  
 If  $GP < MD$      ...     Sample belongs to Z

When the difference between the value of the mediant combination GP and that of MD is large, some distinction between the class X and Z may become apparant, but X and Z, generated from the same set of *Khandamererus* have a very close relationship between themselves and can smoothly pass from one to the other without creating a sense of discontinuity.

From the analysis presented above, we find that all the samples satisfy the criteria for inclusion in a basic Raga-Ragini structure in a rudimentary form as defined by Sanyal. Of course, it should be pointed out that labelling songs by *Khandamerus* and *matrikas* only helps to make broad classifications. The details of the manner of presentation of either *Raga* music or folk music are not apparent from such classification.

It may be argued that the samples have been examined on the basis of an assumption with a particular bias. An alternative assumption could be that dissonant combinations can appear with equal probability. As none of the samples show a predominance of combinations of vivadi notes, this assumption cannot be accepted.

We find that CDEFGAB<sup>b</sup>C is the only scale used in all the firms of the songs of Barabhum area, described above. E is occasionally touched in *Tusu* and *Khyapar Dhua*. In *Nachni Saila* A has also been touched in a few samples. Thus the scope of variety is limited to a small range of notes. This has to be the case if the tunes are associated with the limited cultural activities of a small locality. Since there is no formal institution for training of folk music, there cannot be any systematic experiments on producing varieties of tunes. Some typical motifs along with appropriate words are spontaneously and gradually crystallised in the area, being associated with different festivals and important occasions in the society and becomes integral parts of the community.

There can be scope for further refinement of the mathematical tool, which may bring minor variation in our conclusions, but on the basis of the analysis it can be tentatively concluded that the songs follow the basic rules of classical Indian music and tend to move toward the classical *Khambaj* group of *Ragas*. There may be isolated primitive pockets in other tribal areas in India, where we may not find any connection with the basic principles of classical Indian music in tribal songs.

There may be several possible ways in which the basic resemblance between the tribal-folk music of Barabhum and classical music, specially *Kirtan*, the form of light classical music predominant in urban Bengal have evolved.

(1) The melodic motifs of the tribal and folk songs were spontaneously evolved in Barabhum area and have contributed to the classicalisation of the associated *Ragas*.

(2) The full fledged *Raga* songs were diffused into Barabhum area and picked up by the untrained villagers and assumed a local pattern.

(3) The spontaneous motifs of the area were elaborated by coming in contact with the central classical pattern by meeting in the midway.

The third case seems to be the most plausible one. Because there must have been some kind of local folk music in the area to begin with. There is also ample evidence that people of this locality came under strong Vaishnava influence since the 16th century and were exposed to classical based Kirtan songs, often patronized by the local Rajput or Rajputised chiefs or cultivated by Vaishnava Sadhus.

The stability of the class Z in Nachni Saila may have been caused by the influence of Khambaj based Kirtan brought to the area from Bengal along with Vaishnava influence. But from the class structure of (5) and (8) we find that a fairly fertile base for such adaptation was there in the more primitive samples in the region. It is unlikely that the people of an area should respond to a totally foreign type of tune in a large scale in a small area with an old tradition. Moreover, although the Nachni Saila and Tusu samples have some similarity with Bengali Kirtan songs, they are also distinctly different, having characteristics of their own, and continuity with the primitive specimens of the area. *Historical speculation about the direction of diffusion of the different varieties of melodic structures present in the area cannot be confirmed unless many songs are analysed, in Nachni Saila form, and samples of folk songs from Bengal, Bihar and Orissa border area of Barabhum'*

### **Some comments on the special features of folk songs :**

To derive the broad general principles underlying the composition of folk songs and to compare them with those of classical songs I have so far discussed only about the total impact of the distribution of notes brought into relief of long duration, either continuously or in a scattered manner, without bothering about the details of the pattern. Keeping the total duration of the *matrikas* the same, the individual samples may show special characteristics.

Now I shall make a few comments about the problem of identifying the special features of folk songs. This problem is more complicated, and rigorous tools for analysing this aspect are yet to be worked out. The detailed study of a musical piece needs scrutinisation of the following aspect.

(1) The exact position of the *Srutis* used for a particular composition.

(2) **Temporal arrangement of the notes.**

(3) **Distribution of sequences in different clusters-pairs, triplets, quadruplets, etc. in order to determine (i) the preferential distribution of different melodic motifs, (ii) whether some sequences are consistently prohibited.**

According to the nature of the problem attention may have to be focussed on various short range and long range motives regulating the movements of the pattern. The pattern within two consecutive bars in the rhythm cycle may reveal some aspects. The relation between the movements upto the completion of an octave or a stanza, and within the span of a smaller unit may have to be worked out in detail similar to analysing passages in language. From such scrutinisation we may have some idea about the purpose behind the choice of neighbouring notes and its relation to the ultimate goal or overall planning of the pattern and the rule that determines "completeness" of the total composition.

The problem is to decipher the steps unconsciously arranged in the mind of the composer. Any structure shared by a group of people is built up on the basis of some unwritten prescription. In the game of chess, each movement has some immediate logical significance and the ultimate goal is achieved by a correct sequence of steps. In the same way, placing of one unit in the musical pattern is made with a view to relating it to a distant unit. In nature too we observe analogous phenomena in the growth of crystals with long range periodic symmetry built up of atoms linked together according to some definite laws of binding. Atoms in their turn are formed of nucleus and electrons bound together in a different pattern, following the same basic laws. Depending on the purpose of study the unit on which attention has to be focussed may be an electron or proton, an atom composed of these units a molecule a cluster of molecules or arrangement of molecules or atoms in the periodic crystal.

Similarly, in the case of analysis of folk music we shall have to examine the samples both by reduction to elemental units and by observing the various possible combined units until we can locate the characteristic features of samples we group together as folk music on the basis of the region to which they belong, as well as on the level of the particular musical stimulus aroused by them. Such a thorough investigation is outside the scope of this paper. A general trend towards complexity of tribal and folk songs as distinct from classical songs become apparent from the notation of the tribal, folk, light classical and classical songs.

We find that the pivotal points denoted by long duration are presented continuously in tribal music but in more evolved music they are scattered and distributed over a long range and needs more concentra-

tion in listening, so that the long range relationships are properly impinged on the ear. Again I am tempted to give an analogy from crystal physics. We know that in liquids there are clusters of atoms with a short range order, but the long range order obtained in solid crystals are absent. Tribal songs can be composed to liquid and classical songs to crystalline solids. The small cluster are repeatedly presented in most of the songs of Manbhum and can be considered to be a characteristic motif of the area. There may be isolated places which would be found to have music totally different from the general pattern of Indian music we are familiar with. Such samples of songs may be more useful in defining the special characters of music categorised as folk music. From these specimens some measurable selection principle of musical units may emerge.

Characters other than melodic patterns, such as way of throwing the voice, nature of articulation of words and nature of accompanying instruments may become important in characterising folk music. Study of such aspects again are beyond the scope of the present study. It seems that a research team comprising anthropologists, linguists and musicologists may do useful work on the different aspects of folk music.

TABLE 18

I S A R H U L					
Specimen 1			Specimen 3		
C.N.V.	C.V.K.	C.V.M.	C.N.V.	C.V.K.	C.V.M.
S—36	DSG—44	SGPD—91.70	S—31	S.G P.49	SGPD 68%
G— 8	SGP—44		R—19	DSG 49	
R— 4			G—18	MDS—35	
			M— 4		
Total 48	Scale SRG(P) (D)		Total 72	Scale SRGM (P) (D)	

II K A R A M					
Specimen 5			Specimen 6		
C.N.V.	C.V.K.	C.V.M.	C.N.V.	C.V.K.	C.V.M.
S—21	SGP—31	SGPD—50%	M—33	SGP—57	SGPD—61%
		SRMD—83%	P—29	MDS—47	SRMD—51%
R—21	DSG	} 29	G—16	RMD—37	RMPn—68%
G—10	MDS		S—12	PnR— 33	
	RMD		R ) 2	DSG—30	
M— 8	nRM		D ) 2	nRM—36	
			n ) 2		
Total 60	Scale : SRGM (P) (D)		Total 96	Scale SRGMPDn	

### III DANR SAILA

#### Specimen 7

C.N.V.	C.V.K.	C.V.M.
M—11	SGP—26 (57%)	SGPD—65%
P—10	MDS—23 (50%)	SRMD—50%
S— 8	DSG—20	RMPn
G— 8	RMD—19	
R— 4	nRM—16	
D— 4	PnR—15	
n— 1		

Total 46 Scale SRGMPDn

### IV TUSU

#### Specimen 8

C.N.V.	C.V.K.	C.V.M.
S—18	SGP—41(54%)	SGPD 60%
M—16		
G—15	MDS—38(50%)	SRMD 63%
R— 9	DSG—37	RMPn
P— 8	RMD—29	SgPn
D— 4	ngM—28	
n— 4	PnR—16	
g— 2	SpN—14	

Total 76 Scale : SRGMPDN

#### Specimen 9

C.N.V.	C.V.K.	C.V.M.
M—24.5	MDS—44(50%)	SRMD—66%
S—16.5	nRM—	
R—15.5	RMD—43.5	RMPN—56%
G—11	SGP—40(44%)	SGPD
g—10	DSG—37.5	SgPN
P—5.5	SgP—29	
n—4	SRR—18	

Total 90 Scale SRgGMPDn

### V NACHNI SAILA

#### Specimen 10

C.V.N.	C.V.R.	C.V.M.
S—27.5	DSG—60%	SGPD—75%
R—16	SGP—58%	SRMD—60%
G—16	MDS—54%	RMPn—39%
P—14	RMD	
M—11	PnR	
n— 8	nRM	
R— 4.5		
d— 1		

Total 98 Scale : SRGMPdDn

#### Specimen 11

C.V.N.	C.V.K.	C.V.M.
S11.5	MDS—57%	SGMD—73%
M— 9	DSG—53%	RMDn—46%
G— 7	SGP—	
P— 6	RMD	
D— 6	nRM	
n— 3	PnR	

Total 46 Scale :SRGMPDn

Specimen 12			Specimen 13		
C.V.N.	C.V.K.	C.V.M.	C.V.N.	C.V.K.	C.V.M.
S—14.5	MDS 66%	SGMD 76%	S—24	MDS 65%	SGMD 76%
M—12	SGP 52%	RMDn 47%	M—18	SGP 49%	RMDn 51%
P— 6	DSG		R—12	DSG	
G— 5	RMD		P—12	RMD	
M— 5	nRM		G—11	nRM	
R— 4.5	PnR		D—10	PnR	
n— 1					
Total 48 Scale : SRGMPDn			Total 96 Scale : SRGMPDn		

Specimen 14			Specimen 15		
C.V.N.	C.V.K.	C.V.M.	C.V.N.	C.V.K.	C.V.M.
S—16	DSG 65%	SGMD 75%	S—21.5	DSG 52%	SGMD 70%
D—15.5	MDS 63%	RMDn 57%	G—1.95	MDS 48%	RMDn 43%
R— 8.5	SGP 44%		M—19.5	SGP 48%	SgPn 35%
G— 7.5	RMD		D— 8.5	RMD	
M— 6.5	nRM		R— 6.5	nRM	
n— 4	PnR		P— 6	PnR	
				SGP	
P—2			n— 5.5	GPn	
Total 60 Scale SRGMPDn			Total 84 Scale SRgCMPDn		

## VI KHYAPAR DHUA

Specimen 16		
C.V.N.	C.V.K.	C.V.M.
S—79	MDS 107	SGMD 123 80%
R—22	SGP 103	RMDn 57 35%
G—16	DSG 99	
M—24	nRM 55	
P— 3	RMD 50	
D— 4	PnR 37	
n— 7		
Total—36 Scale : SRGPDn		



## SIKKI—FOLKART OF NORTH-BIHAR

**B**IHAR has a glorious past and its history goes back to the primitive civilization. This ancient land of Bihar consisted of four main centres viz Vaishali, Anga, Magadh, and Mithila. That Mithila region was the centre of cultural regeneration and was confined to be the seat of imposing and elegant arts and crafts. Among the manifold works on the side of folkart, the Sikki work has been concentrated in the areas comprising Darbhanga and Muzaffarpur districts (of Bihar), has got prominence in it. These two districts have got ancient traditions. This area, in Vedic and Upanishadic period, has known as Videha (country) and its capital was Mithila. The name of Mithila is mentioned in Vedic texts, but is constantly referred to in the Epics and Jatakas. The Videha country (of the Upanishadic period) has been the centre of different crafts, since time immemorial.

In this ancient region, women are engaged in preparing desired articles out of golden-coloured Sikki grass. From the study of Vedic and Smriti literatures, we learn that Kusha ( कुश ) grass was used on auspicious occasions like marriage, puja and other festive occasions. So, the use of Sikki grass was not a new thing to the womenfolk of this ancient land.

The social customs prevalent among the rural population of Mithila has interesting traditions. In every agricultural society of different areas, the women, rich or poor, prepare basket, out of wheat and rice straw for storing grains and other things. But in this land of Videha the use of coloured and beautiful articles was a general practice in the village-folk. There was a tradition in this region, which is still continuing, that the young maidens should know this art of Sikkiware prior to their marriages. So, marriageable girls particularly, acquire this skill from their elders. After marriage the bride has to carry the different coloured articles (locally called Bhara) prepared by herself and also by her mother and grandmother to the bridegroom's house and thereby, she is highly respected in that family. Her own articles are displayed, separately and their merits and demerits are described in comparison with the works of other daughters-in-law of the same house. Thus, in the husband's house the standard of the bride's family

is measured according to the execution, fineness and colour of the Sikki articles (brought by her). This is the reason that this craft has survived the vicissitudes of time in North Bihar.

The golden Sikki grass which grows in abundance, during the monsoon, is a kind of long stemmed grass found in the wasteland of North Bihar. In the rainy season, it reaches its full growth, and upper portion of the grass which contains the flower is removed. The remaining portion is divided into thin pieces and preserved throughout the year for making Sikki articles. After this, the grass can be dyed in many colours by ordinary process of dying. The women of the village, generally, dye it in some important native colours, such as red, black, blue, green etc. In the dying process of Sikkiware, a solution of colour and water is prepared; then the heat is applied to it. The Sikki grass is thrown in a hot solution and after a few minutes it is taken out and then spread out to dry. Hence, the women take great care in admixing the colour and using them on Sikkiware. In olden days, ladies used to prepare the colours out of natural flora such as green colour from leaves, red from red flowers etc.

The process of making different articles out of sikkiware is very interesting one. First of all, the lower portion (bottom) is made and then it is coiled up to make the articles step by step. During this process of preparation of such articles, a simple needle (called Takua) and a knife are used for this purpose. Thus, the beautiful, attractive and useful articles are made out of this golden grass.

These Sikkiware are more or less the creation of womens' imagination, influenced by traditions and religious beliefs. The Tantrika influence can be noted prominently in such works, as Bhairva-chakra, Kōla-chakra etc. Some religious Gods and Goddesses are carved out on this ware such as Moon, Sun, Siva etc. Some symbolic representations also appear on this ware namely : Saptadal, Swastika, Shankha-chakra, Tri-ratna (Tilla), Pushpa-ratna (Fullia) etc. There are some other articles too, which are of daily use,\* such as Pauti, Mouni, Dhaukuli, Dagara, Changeri, Kosia etc. Specially Changeri is used to give sweets or other items of breakfast, whereas Pauti is used for keeping the domestic articles. Both of these two, the Changeri and Pauti have many varieties such as Panbatti-pauti, Birahara-pauti, Mandir-pauti, Virtokara-pauti, Matsya-pauti etc. and Peauliya-changery, Pana-changeri, Kosava-changeri, Matsya-changeri etc. Besides all these, even the bal-buttas, many geometrical shapes (as triangle, circle, rectangle etc.) can be noticed in this Sikki work.

If one minutely observes the above mentioned Sikki articles, one can trace easily many designs which are knitted in it and these are

locally called Kodhi ( कोढ़ी ) Chhanajhitaki ( छणभीटकी ) Darhiya ( दरहिया ), Podhiya ( पोढ़ीया ) Bayin ( बायिन ) Laheriya ( लहेरिया ) Latti ( लत्ति ) Kataral-pan ( कतरल पान ) Chhuniya ( छुनिया ) Pata-masiya ( पटमसिया ) Kharua ( खरऊआ ) Chayodiya-kosa ( छयोदियाको ). Besides one finds numerous flower designs which are locally called Chuttiyadhari-phula ( चुट्टीयाधारी-फूल ) Chituva-phula ( चितुवा-फूल ) Pat-masiya-phula ( पटमसीया-फूल ) Chavani-phula ( चवनी-फूल ) Bichhuva-phula ( बिछुवा-फूल ) Chaduan-phula ( छदुआ-फूल ) Singhari-phula ( सिङ्घारी-फूल ) and so on.

Some of these designs are traditional one. These designs are found on Harappan potteries and Punch-marked coins of ancient India. Thus, one can easily conjuncture that these ancient designs are handed down from generation to generation and today, one sees it among the village folk.

If one looks into the Maithili folksongs he will find numerous references of this Sikki work. The great Maithili poet Vidyapati has referred to this Sikki art in his poems. The gist of some folksongs are as follows :—

In conversation between the two young maidens, one said to another that we are so much attached ourselves with this Sikki work that we could not do without it. On the contrary, we have prepared thin and beautiful decorative Sikki articles, with flower designs. Further, the poet Vidyapati adds that the young girls were eager to fulfil their desires and they can not tolerate the time limit.<sup>1</sup>

In other folk-song there is a description of articles of Sikki grass namely Dala and Changeri.

In the second folksong also, the same type of idea is depicted. It relates to the conversation of two gentle ladies; that they used to pluck the flowers in midday of Chaitra month (of Hindu calendars) and the keeping the Changeri (Sikki articles) on the head. The women say that we have plucked the flowers full of *dala* and *Changeri* (both made of Sikki grass). While they have plucked the flowers full of basket (*dala*) and Changeri the thorns of the flowers have pierced their fingers.

1. Sikki chita nahi hama jayaba sajani ge,  
Sikki nahi chorata parana sajani ge,  
Mahi mahl sikkiya bichhi bichhi chiralo,  
Sundar banalo phula dali sajani ge.  
Bhanahi Vidyapati Sunu saba sakhiyan  
Kahana purata mana asha sajani ge,  
Sikki nahi chorata parana sajani ge.

The Ladies asked O God ! who will remove the thorns from the fingers and who will remove this pain ?<sup>2</sup>

Thus the Sikkiware, the prominent folk art of Videha, has got an important place in Maithili folk literature.

The Sikki work of this ancient land of Mithila is an expression of the feelings of the womenfolk. They look at the nature, observe the flora (the plant world), study the life of animals, birds and human features. Then they design different and diverse objects on it.

The close relationship of Sikki works with the life of the people of Mithila has kept the tradition alive through many generations. An effort is now being made to revive and develop this beautiful Sikki folk-art as an industry and to persuade the women to prepare a few articles for commercialization. A centre has already been established at Manigachi and Sursanda (Darbhanga and Muzaffarpur District) with this very purpose. In a nutshell, we can say that a Sikkiware is the spontaneous product of Mithila, imbuing the ancient folk spirit, guided and inspired by the religion and nature. It combines many qualities, taste, refinement and sense of composition of colours. The varieties differ on minute details of the artistic preparation. Hence, the tradition of the folkart, (making Sikkiware) of the ancient land of Videha has developed mostly as utility and decorative folkart. It reflects the women's great qualities of head and heart, and love for beautiful objects. Besides this, the Sikki work shows, the social customs, aspirations and beliefs of ancient traditions of Mithila. Thus, the grace and refinement of this Sikki folkart of Videha is a great contribution of Bihar to the field of folkart.

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2. Choti moti dhaniya sira pe changeriya,  
Kusumi lodhalo ho dupahariya ho Rama,  
Dala bhari lodhalo changira bhari lodhalo,  
kusumi lodhalo ho dupahariya ho Rama, Chatahi mase.  
Dala bhari lodhalo changeria bhari lodhalo,  
Kusmi lodhata katava gadi galo ho Rama,  
Kahi mora anguriya se katava nikali ho  
Kahi mora hari hai daradiya ho Rama ; Chatahi mase.

KARTICK CHANDRA SHASMAL

## A CASE STUDY OF BAURI MARRIAGE

<sup>1</sup> It is a study of different rites and rituals in a negotiation form of marriage among the Bauris of Hooghly district, in West Bengal. The writer has surveyed eight Bauri villages which includes 247 families covering 1,270 men and women. It is interesting to note that every castes—scheduled or upper have their priests for socio-religious activities but the Bauries have no priest. A member of their community acts as a priest.

The Bauris generally prefer marriage (*Biya*) by negotiation. Marriage by love (*Bhalabasa Biya*) are rarely found. Re-marriage of widow or divorced women (*Sanga*, or *Nika*) are widely practised by them.

Different stages of marriage by negotiation may be grouped under three headings—(A) Preliminaries, (B) Marriage and its preparatiin, (C) Post-marital rites. Some descriptions of these stages are given below.

### A. Preliminaries

#### (a) *Negotiation*

- (i) Marriage proposals are placed to the guardians of bride and bridegroom by some elderly persons of the same community.
- (ii) Inquires are made about the families of the both bride and groom,
- (iii) Selection of bride and groom after these.

#### (b) *Ashirbad*

- (i) Fixation of bride price. (ii) Fixation of time (Lagan) and date of marriage. (iii) Blessings are done for happy union.

### B. Marriage and its preparation

#### (a) *Marriage preparation*

- (i) 'Gae-halud' or anointment of turmeric paste and ceremonial bath. (ii) Erection of marriage booth—'Chhamra Tala,' it consists of

4 post covered with one or two slops and is of 2'×2'×2'. (iii) Erection of earthen platform. (iv) Starting the marriage procession. (v) 'Anchal Chauli'—Ceremonial send off the groom by the mother (vi) Reception at the bride's house.

(b) *Marriage ceremony*

(i) Hanging of 'Gua-paita', or sacred thread, with a betel nut, round the neck of the groom. (ii) Exchange of garland—'mala badal.' (iii) 'Kusum dangi' or 'Sindur dan'—application of vermilion on the 'Sinthi' or hair parting of the bride. (iv) Tying the wedding knot. (v) Ceremonial removal and rice feeding.

(c) *Send off the couple*

(i) 'Bandapan' or blessings and presentation for the couple. (ii) 'Anchal Chauli'—ceremonial send off the couple by the bride's mother.

(d) *Reception at bridegroom's house*

(i) Undoing the wedding knot and removal of 'Gua-paita.' (ii) 'Atta-pukur'—throwing away garlands etc.

**C. Post marital rites**

(a) *On the next day*

(i) 'Jore-jaoa'—the couple goes to bride's father's house.

(b) *On the 9th day*

(i) 'Dal-vasano'—removal of marriage booth into the water, in bride's father's house. (ii) Return to groom's house. (iii) 'Dal-vasano'—removal of marriage booth in groom's house.

(c) *On the 10th day*

(i) 'Jore-bhanga'—comming back of the bride to her father's house.

## II

This case study of marriage was made in 1369 B.S. in connection with the marriage of Shri Gopalchandra Das, aged 24 of village Melki. He was living with his widowed mother—Nanibala, aged 51 and younger brother, Satyacharan. His wife Arati Das, aged 17, was the daughter of

late Abaninashchandra Das of Kapilpur. When marriage proposal came to Nanibala through Durga Das of the same village, Nanibala asked the consent of Gopal who gave his consent. One day, Nanibala with Jasanbala—a neighbour went to Kapilpur to see the bride. They were cordially received by Fulmani—the mother of the bride. They selected the bride for suitable match. At the time of their departure, Nanibala requested Fulmani to see Gopal at a suitable date by going to her house. Day was then fixed. On the appointed day, Fulmani, along with her eldest daughter Angura and a neighbour came to see Gopal-chandra. They were fully satisfied with all the required informations and selected the prospective groom.

### **Preliminaries**

Getting the consent of Fulmani, Gopal's mother requested Raghunath, the village headman to see the bride. On an appointed day a party consisting of five members went to bride's house. This party is locally known as '*Jutni*.' Raghunath leader of '*Jutni*' asked whether the bride was '*Amdali*' or '*Jamdali*.' The answer came, it was '*Amdali*' i.e. it is a case of regular marriage. '*Jamdali*' indicates a '*Sanga*' or '*Nika*' marriage (widow or divorced marriage). Then Raghunath asked whether the family was '*Ayodhya*' or '*Mathura*' type. The other party answered that the family was of '*Ayodhya*' type i.e. there is no irregularity in the family (If there is any irregularity, the answer would be '*Mathura*' type). Before their departure, food and rice beer etc. were offered to them. The party then invited Fulmani and others to come to Gopal's house in return.

On a selected day the bride's party came to Gopal's house. They asked similar questions as in case of the bride. They also were duly entertained with food and drinks. They fixed up a date for '*Ashirbad*.'

### **'Ashirbad'**

'Ashirbad' generally takes place in the bridgroom's house first among the Bauris. It will also be held in bride's house next. A group of men and women, five in all, came at Gopal's house in the afternoon. They carried the following articles along with a new napkin.

(i) A covered earthen vessel containing '*muri*' (purchased rice) '*chira*' (chopped rice), '*batasa*' (sugar cake). (ii) a garland of wooden beads. (iii) '*Ghunsi*'—red cord to wear at waist. (iv) A nodule of earth of the Ganges. (v) Sandle paste. (vi) Turmeric paste. (vii) A betel leaf.

(viii) Sweets. (ix) A dhuti and a ganjee.

On the arrival of the party Nanibala supplied them water to clean their feet. Sitting on the seats, the leader of the party handed over the articles, except betel leaf and sweetmeats to the head of the village, Raghunath who was specially invited to attend the function. Wearing the presented 'dhuti' and 'ganjee' Gopal appeared with a 'barandala' placing over his head. The 'barandala' contained the following article :—

(i) Some paddy (*Oryza sativa*); (ii) Durba grass (*Conodon dactylon*); (iii) Kawri; (iv) Sandle paste; (v) A 'ghot'—sacred water pot with a mango twig.

When Gopal began to move, a married woman sprayed water from the 'Mangal Ghat.' He was accompanied by his sister's husband and Raghunath. He sat on a wooden 'asana' (seat) facing east, in front of the party who came to notice him. Raghunath took off the 'barandala' from Gopal's head and placed it on the mat. Gopal bowed down his head to pay his respect. Abinash, the bride's father took a portion of sandle paste with left little finger and marked dots on forehead, neck, the backbone near head, back near waist and on two knee-joints. He blessed Gopal with some paddy and 'durba' grass. Then he offered sweets and betel to Gopal, who again bowed down to him. Abinash gave him a rupec. All who were present there, followed Abinash. Then Gopal left the place again with 'barandala.'

But before this 'Ashirbad' ceremony, there was discussions about bride price and the date of marriage. The bride's party demanded Rs. 18/- as bride price and Rs. 2/- as 'Chaukidari'—fee for village watchman. It was decided that Rs. 16/- would be paid as bride price besides Rs 2/- as 'Chaukidari.' It may be mentioned here that there is no fixed bride price. It varies from village to village and bride to bride.

A few days later, on an appointed day, Raghunath and two other villagers came to bride's house for 'Ashirbad.' They took with them, (i) A Sari; (ii) A bliuse; (iii) One phial of coconut oil; (iv) One phial of 'Alta'—Lac-dye; (v) A packet of vermilion.

They were warmly received. A similar ritual as observed in bride groom's house, was performed bride's house too. The date of marriage and the 'Lagan' was finalised. It was decided that marriage would take place on Tuesday in the last week of Falgun (February-March).

## Rites and Rituals

Actual rites and rituals of marriage begins from this day. On the day of 'gae-halud'—a temporary shed called 'Chhamratala' was erected



on the courtyard of Gopal's house. It had four posts covered with a shed. Under that shed an earthen altar was made and it was cleaned with paste of cowdung. 'Gae-halud' ceremony was observed on three days before the marriage but now-a-days it is generally performed on the day of marriage. The time for this 'Stri achar' (rite of the women folk) is fixed at the evening but in the forenoon, a portion of turmeric which was touched with Gopal's head was carried to the bride's house along with the following by Gopal's sister's husband, Shyamcharan and two others (i) Sari; (ii) Soap; (iii) Mirror; (iv) Comb; (v) Vermilin; (vi) 'Alta'; (vii) A phial of oil; (viii) 'Kajal lata'—receptacle of collyrium; (ix) Garland; (x) Ghunsi; (xi) Iron bangle—'Noa'; (xii) Betel; (xiii) Betel nut; (xiv) Nine pieces of turmeric; (xv) An earthen vessel containing 'Chira,' 'murki.'

In the evening Raghunath applied some turmeric paste on the forehead of Gopal. Then married women annointed the turmeric paste on Gopal's body and gave him a 'Janti'—betel nut cutter. During this times the assembled women sing :

*"Ke halud betechhe, ke halud betechhe  
Ogo boli, darkacha halud  
Makhogo sadher bala,  
Darkacha halud" which means,*

"Who has prepared the paste from bad turmeric? Oh, dearest son, though it is bad turmeric paste, never mind in applying this on your body."

On the completion of this 'Stri-achar' Gopal took his bath in a nearby pond where he is accompanied by the aforesaid ladies. Taking bath, he came back home and took his meal along with the relatives. This meal is known as 'Aiburo bhat'—bachelor's meal. Similar rites and rituals were observed in bride's house.

On the marriage date at about 11 A.M. Shyamacharan and nine women took Gopal for his bath. He stood in waist deep water of the pond and made room on the surface of the water by 'Janti,' and took his bath in that imaginary room. He was then carried on shoulder by Shyamcharan. Before entering into the house, Gopal jumped seven times taking the name of the bride over the fire made of straw. Gopal was then fed with rice prepared in the house of Brahman.

In the meantime the nine accompanied women were ready to worship 'Jalma'—goddess of water. The following articles in a brass plate (known as 'Barandala') are needed for her worship :—

(i) Pradip—an earthen candle; (ii) Natai—reel on which thread

is wound ; (iii) Nara—pastle ; (iv) Betel ; (v) Betal nut (vi) Paddy ; (vii) Durba Grass ; (viii) Vermillion ; (ix) Conch ; (x) A hen egg ; (xi) A nodule of cowdung.

To put on a new sari Nanibala used to carry 'Barandala' to the pond. The nodule of cowdung was placed on an earthen ball. The egg was kept on the cowdung. The 'Natai' was kept standing by the side of it. These were marked with vermilion. She then worshipped it when the other women sing—

*"Khulo, khulo, Jalma thakurun,  
Kunchir Kapat kholo ;  
Gopaler ma esechhe,  
Tomar puja Korte"* which means,

"Oh goddess of water, please open up your door and give us water ; Gopal's mother has come to propitiate you."

And then they recite,

*"Tuku Tuku jol dao  
Jolma-thakurun ;  
Khabo na bilabo,  
Ghoti vore jol dao,  
Chheler biya debo"* which means,

"Oh mother, do favour and supply us enough water as the marriage ceremony of Gopal will be held to-day."

During this time women blew conches and made a kind of sound which is known as 'Uloo dhyani.' From there they went to propitiate a 'Sheora' tree. Vermilion marks were made on the trunk and a branch was tied with red thread from the 'Natai.' They also sing—

*"Sheora gachhe sutor khi,  
Sheora gachhe sutor khi,  
Bala go tomui baro saje,  
Tomar rani garabini .  
Jeno lal piata ase"* which means,

"Oh Sheora tree, with red thread, you are looked beautiful ; as if a newly married woman."

After their return, a white thread was tied on the right wrist of Gopal by Raghunath as he worked as priest. At 'Chhamratala' Gopal was placed on a wooden seat ('Pinri'). A 'pali' (cane pot) containing

rice and pulse was placed before him. Raghunath then placed a betel on Gopal's head and poured mustard oil on it. When the oil dropped down on the rice and pulse in the 'Pali', Gopal stirred it by betel nut-cutter. This oil mixed rice was then divided into four portions and kept in four corners of the altar of 'Chhamratala.' In the middle of the altar, a 'Kolsara' (an earthen lid covered with another) was placed. Similar rites are observed in bride's house.

### **Marriage procession**

The wedding party known as 'Barjatri' consisting of the bridegroom, headman of the village, a few relatives and friends came to bride's house in the evening. The party took the following articles,

(i) An earthen pot with water taken from a Brahman family. (ii) Two 'Vantivanr's'—one for Choukidar and other for villagers of the bride's village. 'Vantivanr' is small earthen pitcher containing sweets, covered with a lid. (iii) Two saris—one for the bride and other for bride's mother. (iv) One dhuti for bride's father. (v) One petty coat, and one blouse for the bride. (vi) Money as bride price and other expenses.

The bridegroom wore new clothes and puts on his head the marriage tiara known as 'Maur'. Before starting Nanibala gave Gopal some milk to drink and at the gate of the house, 'Anchal Chauhi' ceremony was performed. She asked 'Gopal, Where are you going?' Giving some rice from a brass plate. Gopal replied, 'I am going to bring your maid servant' and offer her some rice which he places on the 'Anchal' of her mother. It was repeated thrice. On the last turn, Gopal gave up the brass plate in his mother's 'Anchal'. So concluded 'Anchal Chauhi' ceremony. 'Anchal' means the upper portion of the cloth by which a woman covers her body.

The wedding party was cordially received at bride's house. Gopal was advised to stand on a banana leaf, when the bride's mother washed his feet with turmeric water. After taking their seat, Raghunath handed over all articles, including bride price (Rs. 16/-) and *Chaukidari* (Rs. 2/-) to bride's father. Abinash as previously settled.

### **Ceremony proper**

The bridegroom was then taken to 'Chhamratala' where he stood on a wooden seat. Shyamacharan went to take the bride from a room where she was kept hidden. After a while, Shyamacharan carried the bride on his lap and the bride also stood on a wooden seat on the left

side of the groom. The headman who worked as priest of the bride's village handed a 'Gua-paita' (a thread is passed through the hole of a betelnut) round the neck of the bridegroom. A golden ring presented by the bride's father was put on Gopal's finger. The priest loudly uttered the marriage 'mantra'. The assembled members shouted thrice, "Haribolo". The marriage mantra is as follows :—

*"Shri Hari, Shri Hari,  
 Bamun rup dhori,  
 Hanu anlen phal,  
 Sita railen gachh  
 Dine dine bare gachh,  
 Dua dash hat  
 Swarage achhe dharma,  
 Marte achhe basumata,  
 Gopaler Songe Aratir biya."* etc. The meaning is,

"Taking the name of Lord Hari I am performing the duty of a priest. Dharma and Basumata, you are all witness, I am giving marriage of Arati with Gopal. May their family grow like the plant brought by Hanuman and planted by Sita Devi."

Then the bride and groom was moved round the 'Chhamratala' seven times. Seven married women follow them spraying water and making 'Uloo dhyani.' At the end of each round 'baran' was offered to the groom and a woman touch a betel leaf and a pastle on Gopal's cheek. Then the bride and the groom were taken to a covered place for exchange of garlands between the bride and groom which is called 'Mala badal'. Gopal gave his garland on the neck of Arati first and Arati followed Gopal offering her own garland on Gopal's neck.

### **'Kusum dangi' or 'Sindurdan'**

The bride and groom then took their seats near Chhamratala.' The priest applied vermilion on 'Noa'—iron bangles, on 'Janti' and on a 'Pali'. Gopal placed the bangles on the left hand of the bride. According to the priest's direction Gopal applied the vermilion of the 'Pali' on the 'hair parting' of the bride. This application of vermilion is known as 'Kusum dangi'. The priest then made a knot by taking two corners of clothes—one from the bride and the other from the groom. This is known as 'Git bandha'—wedding knot. The couple then bowed down their heads and the priest sprinkled water brought from Brahman's family, on their heads and wished the happy and prosperous life of the

newly married couple. At that time, everybody present uttered 'Hari bolo' thrice. The couple was then taken to a room for dinner.

On the completion of all these rites the bride and the groom sleep at a separate room. This ends the ceremony proper.

### Send off the couple

On the next morning, turmeric paste was applied on the foreheads of couple. The couple again go to 'Chamratala' and sat on wooden seats, wearing marriage tiara. The 'barandala' was taken to them. Presentations were given to the couple. This is known as 'Bandapan.' When the 'Bandapan' ceremony was over, the couple moved round the 'Chhamratala' seven times again and in each round, the bride opened the lids of earthen vessels placed on the alter of 'Chhamratala' and bridegroom placed the lids on the mouth of these vessels. On the completion of seven round they were taken to varendah and offered food consisting milk, 'chira', 'murki' etc. Then the father of the bride placed the left hand of the bride on the right hand of the bridegroom and said,

*"Dharma Sakhi,*

*Surya Sakhi.*

*amar mayeke Gopuler hate sanpe dilam"*; which means,

'Oh Dharma, Oh the Sun, you are witnesses, I have given my daughter to Gopal.' Fulmani also did so. Then party with the couple was ready to leave bride's house. At the gate, the feet of the couple were washed by Fulmani. The couple washed the feet of Fulmani in return. A similar 'Anchal chouli' ceremony of the bridegroom's house, was observed. Fulmani asked her daughter, "Where are you going?" Arati replied, "I am going to work as a day labour." This was repeated thrice.

The bride's party consisting of a few relatives and villagers followed the couple with the following articles:—

(i) Two 'vantivanrs'; (ii) One palm leaf mat; (iii) One banana plant; (iv) A nodule of 'Gur'—country made sugar; (v) 'Biyer dan'—presented articles received by the groom during marriage.

The newly married couple was warmly received by Nanibala. The couple bowed down to her. Nanibala then gave the bride a root of water lily (*Nymphaea stellata*), the bride gave her the nodule of molasses in return. The couple was then taken to 'Chhamratala' where they stood on wooden seats. Gopal placed his left hand with a

'Pali' containing paddy on the head of the bride who stood just before him. Gopal was throwing the paddy with his betel nut cutter to enter into a room.

Similar 'Bandapan' ceremony that of bride's house was observed here. Assembled members made presentation to the couple. The couple change their clothings and put on the clothes for 'Gae-halud' ceremony.

### **'Ata-Pukur'**

Shyamcharan dug a pit, just behind the room; for this Shyamcharan was given rice, pulse etc. The pit was filled with water and a currystone and pastle were dropped into it. The banana plant was also placed in the middle of the pit. This is known as 'Ata-Pukur'.

Raghunath, the priest took off garland, 'ghunsi' and 'gua-paita' from the person of the groom. The bride gave her garland to the priest. This was given to the groom who hide it in the water of the pit and it was the duty of the bride to find it out. This process was repeated thrice. This hide and seek is known as 'Machh lukano'—hiding the fishes. Then the couple and other members took their bath and meal known as 'Bau bhat'.

### **Postmarital rites**

On the next day, the couple was taken to bride's house. This is known 'Jore-Jaen' or going of newly married couple together. The couple lived there for eight days. On the eighth day, Gopal's sister—Sarala and her husband—Shyamcharan went to bride's father's house to bring the couple. They took two 'Vantivanrs'. Some presentations were given to them at the time of their departure in the next day.

### **Ninth day**

On the ninth day after marriage, at the time of their bath, the couple gave away all articles of 'Chamratala' of bride's house into the water of the pond. This ceremony is known as 'dal-bhasano.' After dinner, the couple, Sarala, Shyamacharan and other members of bride's family with two 'vantivanrs' started from bridegroom's house.

Similar 'dal-bhasano' ceremony was also performed in the bridegroom's house after their arrival.

### **Tenth day**

On the tenth day, the bride alone was taken to her father's house with a 'vantivani' known as 'Jore-bhanga-vanr'. This going is called as 'Jore-Bhanga'. The bride lives for months together in her father's house. Thus ended the marriage ceremony.

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## NOTES AND NEWS

A medieval tale of avarice, witchcraft and cruelty lies behind the alleged case of human sacrifice which has earned Kukarson, a tiny village of Agra area in U. P.

Suraj Bhan, 14, was allegedly murdered in a ritual sacrifice at the Nakti Devi temple here, dedicated to Goddess Durga. Baba Sundar Das, a priest, and Bharat Singh of Bhara village have been arrested in this connexion. Ram Singh of Tantpur, a former treasurer of the Agra City Congress Committee, who is wanted by the police, is said to be absconding.

Shaken by this incident, the villagers are afraid to leave their children alone. Attendance at village schools has dropped. When children do go to schools, parents escort them both ways. Even grown-ups prefer to stay indoors after dusk.

Situated amidst fields of yellow flowered mustard and wheat, the Nakti Devi temple is a single-room structure of rubble with a flat roof. A tiny flag flutters atop it.

According to the villagers, the temple is "very old". A huge fair is held there every year on the darkest night of April. The idol is decorated with dazzling aluminium foils.

Within a radius of three kilometres lies a number of villages—Tanpur, Garhi, Karimpur, Bhara, Ghaskata and Basat.

According to the local tradition, the treasure of the legendary dacoit Bona (meaning pigmy), comprising gold coins worth about Rs. 40 crores, lies buried somewhere near Tantpur.

Ram Singh, who lives in a four-storeyed house in stone with nearly 100 rooms and three courtyards, wanted to find the buried treasure. Rajivir Singh, one of the relations, recalled having seen him digging near an old tank of Tantpur. Fixed on the embankments of the tank was a tablet with an inscription in a language unknown to the villagers.

Baba Sundar Das came to the village from Allahabad a few years ago and established himself at the Nakti Devi temple. Ram Singh, who befriended him, shifted his religious activities to this temple although he had earlier established another temple on a rocky mound nearby.

After a spell of penance, marked by sacrificial offering of chickens and goats, digging operations began. At least eight pits, one of them three metres deep, can still be seen near the temple.

When a villager, Raja Ram, objected to digging of his field, he was paid Rs. 200 as compensation, according to local inhabitants.

Police, reconstructing the story on the basis of statements made by the arrested persons, said human sacrifice was decided upon when the treasure could not be located after a 41-days penance during which 40 goats were sacrificed.

## REVIEWS OF BOOKS

Developments of Libraries and Library Science in India, Subodh Kumar Mookerjee,  
Calcutta, World Press Private Ltd. 1969, Rs 21 50

In ancient and mediaeval India there were numerous libraries which were storehouse of knowledge and seat of learning as well to impart formal and informal education. Public library in the modern sense is a new force to act as the social institution. The book under review is a detailed exposition of the history of libraries and library science in India where the author states a history of the ancient and mediaeval Indian libraries as well as modern library practice in eight chapters.

The topics may be categorised in three groups, historical, non-technical and technical. In the historical part, the author discussed the history of the libraries in India from the ancient times to the modern period. The author made justice to the history by discussing the development of libraries from earliest times in the perspective of religion, education, political and social changes not only as the storehouse of knowledge but also as the seat of learning showing the impact of libraries in social life. There was a library movement in different corners of India during the last 50 years. The library association and library conferences played important roles in making the movement successful in India.

The discussion is informative, particularly the growth and development of the library association throughout India and endeavours of the Central and States governments to enact the library programmes. It is enriched with statistical tables and the chapter on copy-right contains detailed and relevant information. The most interesting topics are the history of printing in India and the history of writing, dealt with both the writing materials and the evolution of scripts and typography. The book also has a list of the early printed books in different Indian vernaculars which is an added attraction.

The author discussed a wide range of non-technical topics in the field of Library Science. The working of the University libraries, academic libraries and libraries attached to the research institutions deserve special mention. There is discussion on documentation mentioning the names of the agencies preparing documentation and abstracting services. The public library system, its area, growth and development has also been treated with special reference to library work with children. The readers will agree with the opinion of the author that in creating the social climate and



healthy attitude towards life the social role of the library must be considered. The chapter has been discussed, mentioning in details, the Indian condition, the present and future programmes with a comparative study of the same in the European countries and the U. S. A. The author has also discussed the bibliographical services, the I. N. B., B. N. B., Indian book market, rare and banned books and reading materials project of UNESCO.

In discussing the technical topics the author gave emphasis on organisation and administration of the library including classification, cataloguing, and reference service

The author discussed all the topics in a fascinating way. Two things should be mentioned in this respect which have enhanced the value of the book. First, his statements have been supported by statistical data and tables, reports, and secondly, he has discussed all the Indian topics compared with the state of affairs in the European countries and the U. S. A., so that the readers can get a broader perspective and also can get a view of the development in our country.

This book is very much helpful to the students of Library Science in Indian Universities and also very much interesting to the general readers to know the development of our country in the library field. The appendices are informative, particularly the Dewey Decimal Expansion for Indian Subjects will draw the attention of the librarians to classify the books on Indic subjects. Decimal Classification Scheme is not adequate for that purpose. The expansion of the present author will help the classifiers immensely. The other appendices are Report of UNESCO Study Tour, Education for Librarianship in India, Working of a District Library and Diagrammatic Representations. There is a well-prepared index at the end of the book.

Dr. Piyushkanti Mahapatra

ENGLISH PROVERBS AND PROVERBIAL PHRASES by Apperson, George Latimer.  
A History Dictionary. London J. M. Dent & Sons. 1920. X + 721 pages.  
Republished by Gale Research Company, Detroit, 1969. L.C. 70--76017. \$16.00

The author writes in the preface "This book is a humble offshoot of the great parent stock of the OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY. Its purpose is to trace, so far as may be possible, the history of English proverbs and proverbial phrases in English use". Thus he has collected materials for a period of over seven years from different dictionaries, proverbs collections, newspapers and other sources from 12th to 20th centuries. He has consulted nearly 3,000 different works in English.

The innovative two-way classification greatly facilitates locating a given proverb: the entries are arranged under subject and first significant word. Cross-references have been liberally supplied throughout

the work. Thus, this is not a mere dictionary but a classified of English proverbs and proverbial phrases.

Source references appear before each quotation—year, author title, volume, page, and then the quotation if it is significantly different from that heading the article. In most cases Apperson has supplied at least one quotation or reference for each century, with additional examples to illustrate varying forms of a saying.

The fifth entry under the subject "Rain" (as a verb) serves as an example :

5. It never rains but it pours. 1726 : Swift and Pope.  
Prose Miscellanies, (title of paper) It cannot rain but it pours.  
1755. Franklin, in Works, ii. 413 (Bigelow). You will say,  
It can't rain, but it pours. 1857 : Borrow, Rom, Rye, ch.  
xxviii. 1860 : Reade, Cl. and Hearth, ch. liii. 1904 : Co.  
Folk-lore : Northumb. 171 (F.L.S.). It does not rain but  
it pours down.

The reviewer commanding this book concludes agreeing with the author—"The omissions, both of sayings and illustrations, in a work such as this, undertaken and completed by a single hand, must be many ; but as it is really the first attempt at a comprehensive Dictionary of the kind it is hoped its merit may be found more conspicuous than its deficiencies". No well-organised library can afford to miss this important publication from its collection.

S. S. G.

PASCHIMBANGER PUJA PARBAN O MELA (Fairs and Festivals of West Bengal),  
Vol I ed by Asok Mitra, assisted by Arun K Roy and Sukumar Sinha, Delhi,  
Manager of Publications, crown [41] 320 pages, 9 pages plates & 20 maps, 1969,  
Rs. 9.50

One of the main projects planned by the Co-ops Operations in West Bengal is the publication of four volumes of fairs and festivals of the State : the publication reviewed here, viz. 1st volume relating to the districts of five North Bengal districts (Malda, West Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling and Cooch Behar). The book contains descriptive picture of the location of hundreds of villages along with names and details of their fairs and festivals. The data was collected by circulating questionnaire as also from the published reports in different newspapers and periodicals from time to time. In it, 84 villages of Malda, 128 villages of West Dinajpur, 102 villages of Cooch Behar, 65 villages of Jalpaiguri and 39 villages of Darjeeling are covered through 426 questionnaire. It is, therefore, interesting to note the total population of these districts along with their literacy be-

cause it will help one to guess of his own the authenticity of the book under review. The following table provides the picture :

	Population			Literacy in per centage		
	Rural	Urban	Total	Male	Female	Total
1. Malda	1,171,138	50,785	1,221,923	21.5	5.8	13.8
2. West Dinajpur	1,223,828	98,969	1,323,797	26.0	7.2	17.1
3. Jalpaiguri	1,235,478	123,814	1,359,292	27.1	10.0	19.2
4. Darjeeling	480,003	144,637	624,640	40.1	15.5	28.5
5. Cooch Behar	948,360	71,446	1,019,806	31.4	9.3	21

The present volume aims to show that the vast fairs and festivals that surround the life and living of the Bengalee community and as in volume No. 2 (Review appeared in July, 1969 issue of this journal) this volume also has maintained its pattern and get-up. In fact, the work is only nearly complete and it would be in the fitness of things for the Census Operation to make arrangements to add more important data as well as those fairs and festivals which are left out with due mention of change so as to make the work a complete one. But whatever lapses are there one cannot but congratulate the editor for his wise thought and labour on the book. Readers of the present volume will be immensely benefited and will also look forward with pleasure to the publication of the two further volumes in which the project is expected to be completed

S. S. G.

LOKAYATA BANGALA, (In Bengali, Folklore of Bengal) by Prof. Sunil Chakravarty, Calcutta, Kalyani Prakashan, available at Indian Publications, 3, British Indian Street, Calcutta, 1, 1969, Rs. 8.00.

The book under review has four chapters such as, *lok-sanskriti* (folk culture) *lok-sangeet* (folk song) *lok-charya* (folk rituals) and *lok-chitrakala* (folk art). There are eight plates of Kalighata at the end of the book. The introduction has been written by Sankar Sen Gupta. The book attempts to tackle the subjects from the Marxian point of view and to satisfy the needs of those who are under the influence of Marxian ideology. The book can be said to be sketchy where the author wants to make the readers understand progressive forces of different genre of folklore as well as the folk life with practical criticism. Some of author's comments may be disputed, but the importance of the book cannot be belittled by that. The utility of the book has been enhanced by the addition of plates and index.

B. N. Shastri

## EDITORIAL

With this issue "Folklore" has passed another successful year of its existence for which we offer our heartiest thanks and regards to our friends, well wishers, contributors, subscribers, advertisers, and readers.

In India today, in each sphere of social, economic and political life, we are experiencing the strains and stresses inherent in the process of directed social change and economic development. It is therefore natural that such strains and stresses are reflected in the pattern of leadership in general and in villages in particular. It is true that largely leadership pattern is a function of socio-economic structure of a given society, but it has to play a positive and dynamic role in any programme of directed change. Research studies of tradition-bound, authoritarian communities like those of Indian where leadership has been long established, reveal the fact that the social distance between status groups (as between castes and classes) makes the leaders of different status group hesitant to join hands with the consequence of that community mobilisation becomes difficult. In the context of directed social change in a society such as ours where equalisation process is at work, one would expect that in a normal course of time progressive democratic leadership would emerge in the rural areas. This has become an urgent necessity in our country in view of the fact that authority is developed and the leaders at the local level are expected to take important role in problems or rural reconstruction. But it is often observed among the folk people that the leadership in the villages is still largely authoritative and conservative being unable to mobilise the community for concerted action.

In our society, more often than not, it so happens that political, caste and economic factors get merged together and a type of a new-traditional leadership restricted to the dominant castes of the village come to the forefront. In fact, this reported by a number of researches to be the order of the day. It is found that the establishment of statutory panchayats through adult franchise has given a new role to the dominant caste. Where a caste is economically and numerically dominant, and ritually higher up its sway in the election is decisive.

Even the social educational activities are not given a fair trial. In fact, the social education functions are so important and fundamental that if properly executed, they would help develop proper social institutions and leadership. As envisaged in the beginning of community development programme, it was important and basic to all activities to create new outlook on the part of the village elite and people through social education programmes and by organising traditional fairs, festivals and the like. But they are not effectively functioning. It is again disheartening to note that the co-operative society and the school, the supposed two basic institutions of a village community, are not effective.

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# Books of Indian Publications Folklore Series

1. *Rain In Indian Life & Lore*, An Anthology, edited with an introduction by Sankar Sen Gupta, Foreword : Prof. Nirmalkumar Bose, Director, Anthropological Survey of India, Calcutta, 1963. Rs. 18 (Rare).
2. *Studies in Indian Folk-Culture*, An Anthology, edited by Sankar Sen Gupta and Dr. K. D. Upadhyaya, Calcutta, 1964. Rs. 12.
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# FOLKLORE

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SUBHOBROTA ROY CHAUDHURI

## CHRISTMAS LEGENDS AND FOLKLORE

To the people December had been the most favourable month of the year. Christ, the Light of the world, at this time born once more in the hearts of men, said Christian priests later in the world's history. And hearts of men, said Christian priests later in the world's history. And to rejoice and make merry

OUR BEST WISHES FOR A HAPPY  
AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR TO ALL

**The Legends of St. Nicholas:** Nicholas, who lived in the fourth century A.D. is regarded as the patron Saint of travellers on the ocean and of children. One of the stories about him says, that he saved some sailors from shipwreck by the favour and efficiency of his prayers, and that he still keeps guard over all who voyage by sea from his place, in the heavenly kingdom. The giving of Christmas presents probably owes to the origin to St. Nicholas, and also the hanging up of stockings to receive them, for these things were once done on December the Sixth, not on Christmas Day, and they were done in memory of one of the actions thought to have been performed by the Saint.

The feast of St. Nicholas was brought into disrepute in the middle ages by the rioting and irreverence that attended the election of the Boy Bishops, who were chosen on that day. The boy Bishop does his church service from December the Sixth to Holy Innocent's Day. He was even allowed to give blessings and to assist with Mass. At first the rule of Boy Bishop seems to have been carried out with soberness and sincerity and it was put to an end in the reign of Henry VIII.

The children rebelled at being deprived of the fun, and of the many valuable gifts that were showered upon them. And the parents, then as now inclined to spoil their offspring, gradually adopted the habit of giving them presents at Christmas instead.

**Evil Protection by Mistle Toe:** Mistle is, in some ways, the most interesting of all the evergreens which we use for Christmas decorations. Its use at the winter festival goes far back into the past, before the birth of Christ, perhaps even before the events recorded in the Old Testament history. It was the sacred plant of the Druids and the practise of kissing beneath it is thought to be derived from an ancient Druid rite. At the winter Solstice, the Druid priests, followed by their people, went out in procession to some tree on which mistletoe grew, and with an especially consecrated sickle -- said to have been made <sup>gaps</sup> of gold -- cut sprays from the plants. A bull -- sometimes a human being -- was sacrificed beneath the tree from which the mistle toe had been taken, after which the sprays, having been blessed by the Head Druid, were just distributed to the people, who carried them reverently back to their dwellings, and kept them to protect themselves from evil during the coming year.

**The Cattle on the Christmas Eve:** According to the information received from the British folklore and the folklore from other countries, we know that on the night of Christ's birth the dumb creatures realized the holiness of the time and joined with man in worship of the heavenly child. Cattle it was said, knelt in their stalls at midnight, bees stirred and murmured in their winter sleep within their lives, and cocks crew at intervals all night long, to scare any power of darkness that might be hovering around. References to these beliefs are to be found in the English literature. One of the best known comes in Shakespeare's play, where ghost of Hamlet's father, says --

Some say that ever 'gainst the season comes  
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,  
The bird of evening singeth all night long,  
And then, then say, no spirit can walk abroad,  
The nights are witchsome; then no planet's shriek,  
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm;  
So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.

**The Yule Log:** In the past one of the great events of Christmas Eve was the bringing in the lighting of the Yule log, without which Christmas was not Christmas in our forefather's time. The ceremony goes back to the log, forgotten days, when the old Northmen worshipped Odir and Balder, and much superstition was attached to the burning. The log was

not to be lighted until dusk on Christmas Eve. Enough of the log must be saved to burn again at candlemas, and a small piece kept, as well to start the Yule fire again in a year's time. And those who actually laid the fires and set light to them must be sure to wash their hands well before doing so. That was very important part of the ceremony, for, as before doing so.

**Christmas Fare :** A few hundred year's ago, feast on Christmas Day began with a boar's head. When that was eaten, it would be followed by peacocks, chickens, pheasants, swans, vensiors, usually served with frumenty, a broth made with milk, flour, almonds, and the yolks of eggs. Those who disposed of mince pies would be brought in and a connection known as plum porridge, which has now grown solid and become our plum pudding.

**The Bells of New Year's Eve :** In our medieval times Christmas used to be celebrated for 12 days with boisterous, pomb and mirth along with heavy feeling and drinking. A person used to called for making practical jokes which used to make an emotional romantic out burst of laughter. And to-day, as now, romantically minded men and women thought of the old year as a dying person and paused in their revels to toll the bells for its passing and also to maintain and bygone traditions.

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## ACTUALITY OF ROMANIAN FOLKLORE

### I

Sometime ago, Marcel Cellier, an authority on the folklore of Central and South-East Europe, a well-known collector and recirder of wonderful streophonic discs of Romanian folk music, issued by the Philips company, told me that, from an experience of several years he inferred that among all European folk musics, Romanian folk music is the most accessible to the modern taste.

In relating traditional folk music to the taste of the modern man, the Swiss folklorist in fact took up a particularly interesting problem, the confrontation of the values of traditional culture with the culture of the modern industrial society, the chances of some of them to coexist with it, by the quality of getting integrated into contemporary culture. When viewed in its generality, the process is extremely complex and the problems it brings forward seem to be in soluble. But when viewed in its component elements, in the immediate correlations between these elements, it gets chances of being understood. First of all commanding attention is the ascertainment that in the stratifications of the taste in the modern industrial society noticeable in certain conditions and perhaps also from a certain age is an increasing interest for the values of traditional culture, for folklore. This interest goes primarily towards the authentical folkloric forms, hence towards the folklore of those countries where these forms are still vital. They further go towards the contemporary folk ~~at~~ <sup>achievements</sup> of these authentical traditional forms.

### II.

Stemming from the ancient Thracian culture which the antiquity mentioned many a time, and grafted with elements of Roman culture in its blooming epoch, when this culture had agglutinated many elements of the primary stock of East-Mediterranean culture, folk culture has been developing without hiatuses to this day. Hence, it has an history of more than one and a half millenium in the places where the Romanian people live also nowadays. In this span of time, the life of the people, their behaviour,—their customs—and their artistic productions pass from the context of the village communities of the principali-

ties and voivodships, to the subsequent state forms and to the unitary national state today.

In this long process the Romanian people takes over and melts in the retort of its creative spirit elements from the Byzantine or Latin-Medieval cultures, from the cultures of the neighbour Slav peoples, from the Turkish-Arabic or Western Renaissance cultures, from what we generally term modern culture. Situated between the west and the east, it succeeds in providing as an original synthesis—resting on its own culture and its creative spirit—the Romanian folk culture.

But beyond the historical data which justify the present-day interest in the Romanian folklore, stands the vivid reality of the actual wealth and diversity of this folklore that strikes not only folklore enthusiasts and tourists but also the most demanding experts.

Without attempting to give a general description I would like to single out a few facts of this wealth and diversity.

### III

Among the customs of family life, the wedding, which in the villages and sometimes also in the towns of Romania proceeds on traditional lines, is an ample ritual and a picturesque spectacle. Having a unitary pattern this ritual involves, however, distinct forms of certain episodes, also different dresses and songs and dances that lead to regional specifics. This focus of the wedding ritual today is the symbol of the dispute between the two families. This dispute, which was probably real in olden times, is illustrated in the Romanian folklore by a long allegorical poem which tells the story of "emperor" bridegroom going a-hunting and at the well, meeting a "roe deer", the bride, whom he tracks to her parents' home. Here, his envoys describe the bride as a flower that in the parents' garden "does neither burgeon nor bear fruit", and needs transplanting in the bridegroom's garden to blossom to the full.

Special episodes are in perfect correspondence with the theory of rites elaborated by A. van Gennep, the bridegroom's separation from the lads' group and the bride's from the ladies' group. The two groups accompany the bride and bridegroom throughout the ritual. Outstanding in the lads' group is "bradarul" or "stegarul", according to the region's tradition prescribing that the procession carry an adorned fir-tree or a banner consisting of cashmere kerchiefs, ribbons and little bells. The bride's separation from her father's house is marked by a ceremonial song with idyllic tones alternating with aching lyricism.

Like in all the important rituals, the union between the two families is sanctioned by an ample wedding banquet at which, the same as in the Middle Ages at the court banquets, heroic epics are still being sung. The

integration of the bride, who is the central personage of the ceremony, into her new status of wife is illustrated by a change in the ceremonial dress and especially by altering the headdress—the coronet replaced by a kerchief.

In the system of family structure, the wedding establishes new kinship not only between two families but also between these families and those who initiated the bride and bridegroom in the ceremonial, the godfather and the godmother. This sponsorship kinship is marked throughout the country by great banquets in particular days of the year when the sponsors decide to bring together their godchildren who come accompanied by a train, and sometimes noted sponsors have dozens of godchildren coming to such banquets.

#### IV

Among the traditions preserved in Transylvania are two that mark the beginning and end of agricultural works: the one celebrating the first furrow, and the harvesting tradition—that of the coronet. On Palm Sunday the group of lads chooses its leader—the one who came out first with the plough in the field—chair him through the village and confer on him the right to judge them for any negligence in the spring operations.

At the close of harvesting, the group of reapers, boys and girls make a coronet of ears and carry it with pomp and in songs to the house of the host. The coronet is sprinkled with water and solemnly handed over for safekeeping in prominence. The ears have magic virtues and are inserted in the wedding coronet. In the light of the same magic logic, the grain is meant to fertilize the ensuing year's seed.

The New Year is celebrated with great pomp in all Romanian villages and towns. In their traditional pattern, the New Year celebrations marking the passage from one vegetation period to another vegetation period, proceed for twelve days. They start on Christmas Eve and last until Epiphany. The content of these celebrations is pre-eminently, lay, and its significance is passage to and good omens for the incoming year. During the New Year celebrations, groups of children go well-wishing about the village, and groups of lads go from house to house wishing, in artful allegoric verses, happiness, and a tranquil and prosperous life to the host, his wife and children, the prospective bride or bridegroom, etc.

The good wishes for farmers are contained in the special and long allegorical poem "Plaugusorul" which in a poetical but at the same time witty description relates the technique of farm operations from the first furrow to bread-baking. Plugusorul is not only a well-wishing poem but also by its construction a brief versified treatise of particular agrotechny.

## V

The Romanian folklore generally does not know of the carnival in the sense and at the date of its occurrence in the west. In exchange, the New Year's celebrations are occasions for an ample display of mask amusements. These amusements count miscellaneous masks, from symbolic representations of animals to personages specific to various trades, to certain peoples and certain contemporary situations. The procession of masks covers a wide range individually or more often in couples: men masked as brids, goats, camels, the bear and the bear leader, the bride and the bridegroom, the outgoing and the incoming year, etc.

People in some places have preserved a tradition, like in Roman New Year customs, of horse races ("incurcarea cailor").

## VI

Viewed from the angle of the spectacle, besides that of traditions from which we have mentioned only a few, also noteworthy are the dances. In very many villages, there is the tradition, like in the old days, of the Sunday afternoon dance. The hora, or "jocul" as this dancing is termed, is an event in which all the village takes part, the pouncsters for the dance, the married women and especially the mothers to watch and comment, and the men to chat and discuss community affairs. The typological variety of the Roman folk dances is very ample both vertically in the context of the all-country repertory and also vertically in the repertory of a single village. Oltenia counts villages that have preserved over 40 dances in their repertories.

## VII

Worthy of note are also the diversified folk instruments. The Romanian people has created a wide range of instruments. The range of folk music instruments goes from pseudo-instruments like the pear leave or the birch bark, and fish scale, up to the accordion and saxophone today. Among the wind instruments are about 15 kinds of pipes, 5 kinds of alphorns, clarinet and so on. Worth mentioning among the string instruments are the dulcimer, folk guitar, fiddle, etc.

The widest spread of these instruments is certainly the pipe. Everyone can make a pipe with a certain degree of sonority. But top-quality pipes are made by artists with long practice. Some of them have attained veritable manufacturing standards. The Hodac village, of Reghin district, Transylvania, is noted for its pipes—10,000 manufactured every year and sold all over the country.



The doina (a nostalgic folk song) is today considered as a specific genre of the Romanian folklore. But developing parallel to the doina and sometimes steaming direct from it in the Middle Ages and in the modern period is the lyrical song proper : the love song, the fate song and the chance song, the estrangement song, the songs of social protest, etc. The Romanian lyrical song has a regional melodic variety that resembles the one I mentioned above.

## VIII

These were only a few aspects of the Romanian folklore. Discussing of all categories and detailing of all aspects is difficult. I hope, nevertheless, that these few remarks on Romanian folklore will arouse the interest of enthusiasts and experts. Through acquaintance with the Romanian folklore not only leads to delving into the history of European culture but can also help formulate hypotheses as to the ways of integrating the folklore into contemporary culture.

*Director of the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore, Academy of Sciences, Bucharest.*

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PURNIMA SINHA

## FOLK CLASSICAL CONTINUUM IN INDIAN MUSIC

(Continued from December, 1969)

### Discussion :

The information obtained from the analysis of the songs may now be summed up.

For convenience of classification, the principal features of the melodic characteristics of the sixteen specimens of songs have been presented in compact form in Table 18. We shall introduce the terms 'class basis' or simply 'basis' for dominant Matrika, or the set of four pivotal notes on which the melodic structure is built, and 'Class configuration' for the complete set of Matrikas present in a song.

On a first glance at the Table, we may tend to divide the specimens of songs into three classes on the basis of the nature of the dominant *Matrika*. Without bothering about assigning names corresponding to *Raga* classes we can suppose the songs to belong to the following basic categories (i) SGPD (ii) SRMD (iii) SGMD. According to this classification seven songs would belong to class (i) one song to class (ii) (Specimen 9), and six songs to class (iii). From this classification, specimen (9) may seem to be somewhat disconnected and unrelated to the common trend of melodic development in the region. But if we follow the gradual addition of the Matrikas in the samples arranged in order of complexity, we notice that the samples represented by the class bases (a), (b) and (e) are interrelated and it may also appear that one class is evolved from the other in a process of creative experimentation at producing variety in the compositions. The most interesting thing to observe is the tendency of remaining within the framework of some rigid rules while gradually adapting different variations in the framework. The variations are not made in a haphazard manner.

If we start from specimen 1 which is in a rudimentary stage of melodic development we notice a tendency of forming the Matrika (a) SGPD. The tendency persists and develops further in specimen (2). In specimen (3) an additional Khandameru MDS appears. A second Matrika SRMD appears in specimen (4) keeping SGPD in dominant position. In

specimen (5) a trend toward (b) moving to the dominant position is also indicated. A tendency to bring in the Matrika (c) RMPn is also inherent in a composition. In specimen (6) the class configuration (a), (b), (c) becomes distinct, stabilising the trend indicated in the previous specimens. Let us name the class configuration containing the elements (Matrikas), a, b and c as X, and the particular sequence a, b, c as Xabc. In this specimen again the third Matrika (c) tends to go up like (b) in specimen 2. In specimen (7) the class configuration of (6) is maintained but there is a hidden tendency of the class basis to move to (e).

In specimen (8) the class configuration is (Xabc, d) containing elements a, b, c and d. Let us name this set as Y, and the particular sequence a, b, c, d as Y<sub>1</sub>.

In specimen (9) the class configuration also consist of the set Y, but the sequence Z<sup>abc</sup> is changed to X<sup>bca</sup> forming the set {b, c, a, d} This particular sequence may be termed as Y<sub>2</sub>. The class configuration Y<sub>1</sub> and Y<sub>2</sub> are generated as a result of permutation of position of a set of three Matrikas. Other combinations of positions have not been exploited so far. It may be said that the tendency of the Matrikas (b) and (c) to occupy higher position indicated in the previous specimens is fulfilled in specimen (9).

The specimens 1 to 9, representatives of the forms *Sarhul*, *Karam*, *Danr Saila* and *Tusu* exhaust the principal varieties of tunes that have been developed within these forms. In all other songs the same tunes with minor embellishments are used with different word themes.

But the firm *Nachni Saila* provides a field for somewhat more free creative expression of the individual artist. Among the six specimens of *Nachni Saila* analysed so far, one sample (10) uses the class basis (a) and the class configuration Xabc, which is common to *Karam*, *Danr Saila* and a part of *Tusu* forms. Four samples develop the class configuration (e, f) in a stable form. In one sample (15) the configuration become (e, f, d) with (d) as a minor inclusion. Specimen (16) representing the form *Khyapar Dhua* also has the class configuration (e, f). The rhythmic setting of specimen (14) is 4/4, which is different from that of all other forms developed in the area. It is probable that this form is of outside origin and has been adapted to the general pattern of songs in the locality.

The class basis (a) and the class structure X shared by most of the popular traditional forms present in the area may be the older class developed in the area. But most of the songs composed with the configuration X in *Karam* and *Tusu* forms are confusing as regards assignment of class basis due to a lack of correspondence between the position and the value of the set of characteristic Matrikas. Also, the class X did not attain a stable shape in the innovations of *Nachni Saila* specimens studied so far. Although sample (10) is based on this class, there is a tendency in the

composition to move to the class Z which is found to be more commonly used in *Nachni Saila*. The specimen (10) is provisionally categorised as a transitional sample between class X and Z. But it is quite possible that other compositions may be found in which class X would be developed more strongly, for which base is created in sample (10). The nature of indecision in sample (10) cannot be compared with that of sample (5), where attempt at variety was made within a fragment of a scale. In (10), the creative artist is experimenting with variety of emphasis within the span of a full-fledged well established scale. There is a large number of choice between emphasising several explicit *Khandameras*. The musical quality of (10) is in no way inferior to that of the stable sample (14). The samples 11 to 14 have gradually developed the class Z to a stable form. As we proceed toward 14, the relation with X becomes more remote and Z becomes more stable. Without being trained to remain within a restricted set of rules, in the process of creating variety, a rule has spontaneously been developed and stabilised in these samples. In sample (13) again, there is an attempt at extending the scale (13) and (14), belong to class Z but also has some affinity to X.

The process of evolution of the scale as revealed from the study of the songs ranging from the primitive tribal *Sarhul* songs to *Nachni Saila*, the cultivated form of songs, corroborates the proposition of Sanyal (Sanyal 1959: 258) on evolution of scale derived from interpretation of ancient texts and study of classical music. The process observed in the particular songs of Barabhum is described below.

We observe that the particular scale developed in the area evolved by gradual accumulation of notes following the rule that the appearance of one note tends to bring in, with preferential emphasis in terms of duration, those notes generated by operations of 3rd (mediance) and operations of 4th and 5th (consonance) of the note Fig. 1 shows the various theoretically possible notes that tend to come with the appearance of S, following the rule stated above.

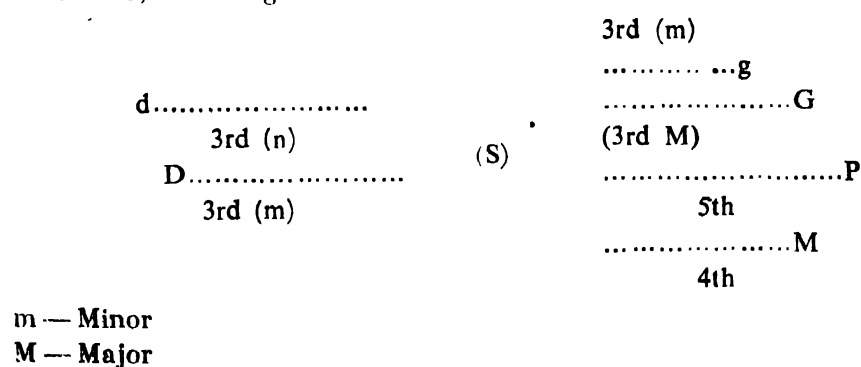


Fig. 1

The process of development of the particular scale to which the songs described in this chapter belong to as follows :

- Step 1 :** The fundamental S appears with a strong G and a feeble R in terms of duration (a tendency to bring in P and D consonant to S and G respectively, is predicted (Specimen 1).
- Step 2 :** The note 'D' appears in addition to SRG, R is feeble. 'P' is again a latent note. (Specimen 2).
- Step 3 :** SRGPD and a touch of M appears. The strength of RM being comparatively weak
- Step 4 :** The mediant pairs SG and RM appears, SG having greater value. The strength of RM is comparatively greater than that of the previous sample. A tendency to bring P and D is predicted (Specimen 4).
- Step 5 :** Both the pairs SG and RM gains strength in terms of duration. In addition to note P and n, consonant to M, is predicted.
- Step 6 :** The notes SRGMPDn appear (Specimen 6).
- Step 7 :** The note 'g' appears in addition to SRGMPDn. (Specimen 8).
- Step 8 :** The note 'd' is touched (Specimen 10).

This covers the whole range of notes used in all the songs.

The set of notes which gradually became prominent (in terms of duration) is in a way similar to the series of overtones generated by plucking or striking of a string tuned to a fundamental note.

In the set ultimately formed, all the notes have their proper partners related by mediance and consonance. Thus, the notes that are notes obtained from operation of 3rd and 5th or 4th on the 1st note, related by mediance and consonance, satisfied, have gradually appeared and became stabilised.

The scale can be considered to be built up by several sets of three notes obtained from operation of 3rd and 5th or 4th on the first note. Such a combination of three notes the *Khandamerus* have successive notes related by alternate major and minor third

e. g. (i)  $\frac{S}{3(M)} - \frac{G}{3(m)} - \frac{P}{3(M)}$ , (ii)  $\frac{D}{3(m)} - \frac{S}{3M} - \frac{G}{3M}$

and so on.

In the scale described above eight *Khandamerus* have been used. All the mediant pairs contributed to form two *Khandamerus*. Only one possibility has not been exploited. The pair GP forms the *Khandameru* SGP, but not GPN, due to the absence of the note N.

### A pair of complimentary Khandameras

(D)  $\frac{\quad}{(m) 3rd}$  S  $\frac{\quad}{(M) 3rd}$  G, S  $\frac{\quad}{(M) 3rd}$  G  $\frac{\quad}{(m) 3rd}$  (P)

may be coupled to form a *Matrika*, where the successive four notes are related by alternate major and minor third e.g.

S  $\frac{\quad}{3 (M)}$  G  $\frac{\quad}{3 (m)}$  M  $\frac{\quad}{3 (M)}$  D.

All the compositions remain within a group with the predominance of two basic set of *Matrikas* X—(a, b, c) and Z—(e, f). In different compositions individual values of the elements a, b, c or e, f changed and in one case the position (sequence in terms of value) changed.

A composition showing a set of *Matrikas* evolved from the rules stated above have characteristics of one or other *Raga* groups. It seems that interchange of position of such a set of *Matrika* without disturbing the constituent notes may produce different classes within the group.

The two sets X and Z generated from the same set of *Khandameras* are also related and may be supposed to form sub-groups of the same group. The set X appears when the value of the *Khandameru* SGP is greater than that of MDS, and Z appears in the reverse case.

The configuration of a group may be represented by a model of coloured discs distributed in numbered boxes in the following way :

- (1) The number of the box corresponds to the position (1, 2, 3 etc.) of the *Matrikas*.
- (2) Area of the disc correspond to the total value of all the notes.
- (3) Colour Scheme of the disc represent the composition of *Matrika*. Each note may be assigned a colour and the disc may be divided into four coloured sectors corresponding to the colours of the notes forming the *Matrika*. Area of a Sector corresponding to a note may be made to represent percentage value of the particular note in the total value of all the notes.

Thus the coloured area in the disc is proportional to the value of the *Matrika*.

In general, higher value is associated with higher position, but exception may also occur.

In case of different compositions belonging to the same class only area of the sectors and the discs varies. Permutation of the discs between different positions generate new classes.

All the samples of songs studied belong to either of the subgroups X—(a, b, c) or Z(c, f). Elements of X and Z do not mix. Element 'd' can enter either set X or Z. For a particular sample

If  $GP > MD$      ...     Sample belongs to X  
 If  $GP < MD$      ...     Sample belongs to Z

When the difference between the value of the mediant combination GP and that of MD is large, some distinction between the class X and Z may become apparant, but X and Z, generated from the same set of *Khandamererus* have a very close relationship between themselves and can smoothly pass from one to the other without creating a sense of discontinuity.

From the analysis presented above, we find that all the samples satisfy the criteria for inclusion in a basic Raga-Ragini structure in a rudimentary form as defined by Sanyal. Of course, it should be pointed out that labelling songs by *Khandamerus* and *matrikas* only helps to make broad classifications. The details of the manner of presentation of either *Raga* music or folk music are not apparent from such classification.

It may be argued that the samples have been examined on the basis of an assumption with a particular bias. An alternative assumption could be that dissonant combinations can appear with equal probability. As none of the samples show a predominance of combinations of vivadi notes, this assumption cannot be accepted.

We find that CDEFGAB<sup>b</sup>C is the only scale used in all the firms of the songs of Barabhum area, described above. E is occasionally touched in *Tusu* and *Khyapar Dhua*. In *Nachni Saila* A has also been touched in a few samples. Thus the scope of variety is limited to a small range of notes. This has to be the case if the tunes are associated with the limited cultural activities of a small locality. Since there is no formal institution for training of folk music, there cannot be any systematic experiments on producing varieties of tunes. Some typical motifs along with appropriate words are spontaneously and gradually crystallised in the area, being associated with different festivals and important occasions in the society and becomes integral parts of the community.

There can be scope for further refinement of the mathematical tool, which may bring minor variation in our conclusions, but on the basis of the analysis it can be tentatively concluded that the songs follow the basic rules of classical Indian music and tend to move toward the classical *Khambaj* group of *Ragas*. There may be isolated primitive pockets in other tribal areas in India, where we may not find any connection with the basic principles of classical Indian music in tribal songs.

There may be several possible ways in which the basic resemblance between the tribal-folk music of Barabhum and classical music, specially *Kirtan*, the form of light classical music predominant in urban Bengal have evolved.

(1) The melodic motifs of the tribal and folk songs were spontaneously evolved in Barabhum area and have contributed to the classicalisation of the associated *Ragas*.

(2) The full fledged *Raga* songs were diffused into Barabhum area and picked up by the untrained villagers and assumed a local pattern.

(3) The spontaneous motifs of the area were elaborated by coming in contact with the central classical pattern by meeting in the midway.

The third case seems to be the most plausible one. Because there must have been some kind of local folk music in the area to begin with. There is also ample evidence that people of this locality came under strong Vaishnava influence since the 16th century and were exposed to classical based Kirtan songs, often patronized by the local Rajput or Rajputised chiefs or cultivated by Vaishnava Sadhus.

The stability of the class Z in Nachni Saila may have been caused by the influence of Khambaj based Kirtan brought to the area from Bengal along with Vaishnava influence. But from the class structure of (5) and (8) we find that a fairly fertile base for such adaptation was there in the more primitive samples in the region. It is unlikely that the people of an area should respond to a totally foreign type of tune in a large scale in a small area with an old tradition. Moreover, although the Nachni Saila and Tusu samples have some similarity with Bengali Kirtan songs, they are also distinctly different, having characteristics of their own, and continuity with the primitive specimens of the area. *Historical speculation about the direction of diffusion of the different varieties of melodic structures present in the area cannot be confirmed unless many songs are analysed, in Nachni Saila form, and samples of folk songs from Bengal, Bihar and Orissa border area of Barabhum'*

### **Some comments on the special features of folk songs :**

To derive the broad general principles underlying the composition of folk songs and to compare them with those of classical songs I have so far discussed only about the total impact of the distribution of notes brought into relief of long duration, either continuously or in a scattered manner, without bothering about the details of the pattern. Keeping the total duration of the *matrikas* the same, the individual samples may show special characteristics.

Now I shall make a few comments about the problem of identifying the special features of folk songs. This problem is more complicated, and rigorous tools for analysing this aspect are yet to be worked out. The detailed study of a musical piece needs scrutinisation of the following aspect.

(1) The exact position of the *Srutis* used for a particular composition.



(2) Temporal arrangement of the notes.

(3) Distribution of sequences in different clusters-pairs, triplets, quadruplets, etc. in order to determine (i) the preferential distribution of different melodic motifs, (ii) whether some sequences are consistently prohibited.

According to the nature of the problem attention may have to be focussed on various short range and long range motives regulating the movements of the pattern. The pattern within two consecutive bars in the rhythm cycle may reveal some aspects. The relation between the movements upto the completion of an octave or a stanza, and within the span of a smaller unit may have to be worked out in detail similar to analysing passages in language. From such scrutinisation we may have some idea about the purpose behind the choice of neighbouring notes and its relation to the ultimate goal or overall planning of the pattern and the rule that determines "completeness" of the total composition.

The problem is to decipher the steps unconsciously arranged in the mind of the composer. Any structure shared by a group of people is built up on the basis of some unwritten prescription. In the game of chess, each movement has some immediate logical significance and the ultimate goal is achieved by a correct sequence of steps. In the same way, placing of one unit in the musical pattern is made with a view to relating it to a distant unit. In nature too we observe analogous phenomena in the growth of crystals with long range periodic symmetry built up of atoms linked together according to some definite laws of binding. Atoms in their turn are formed of nucleus and electrons bound together in a different pattern, following the same basic laws. Depending on the purpose of study the unit on which attention has to be focussed may be an electron or proton, an atom composed of these units a molecule a cluster of molecules or arrangement of molecules or atoms in the periodic crystal.

Similarly, in the case of analysis of folk music we shall have to examine the samples both by reduction to elemental units and by observing the various possible combined units until we can locate the characteristic features of samples we group together as folk music on the basis of the region to which they belong, as well as on the level of the particular musical stimulus aroused by them. Such a thorough investigation is outside the scope of this paper. A general trend towards complexity of tribal and folk songs as distinct from classical songs become apparent from the notation of the tribal, folk, light classical and classical songs.

We find that the pivotal points denoted by long duration are presented continuously in tribal music but in more evolved music they are scattered and distributed over a long range and needs more concentra-

tion in listening, so that the long range relationships are properly impinged on the ear. Again I am tempted to give an analogy from crystal physics. We know that in liquids there are clusters of atoms with a short range order, but the long range order obtained in solid crystals are absent. Tribal songs can be composed to liquid and classical songs to crystalline solids. The small cluster are repeatedly presented in most of the songs of Manbhum and can be considered to be a characteristic motif of the area. There may be isolated places which would be found to have music totally different from the general pattern of Indian music we are familiar with. Such samples of songs may be more useful in defining the special characters of music categorised as folk music. From these specimens some measurable selection principle of musical units may emerge.

Characters other than melodic patterns, such as way of throwing the voice, nature of articulation of words and nature of accompanying instruments may become important in characterising folk music. Study of such aspects again are beyond the scope of the present study. It seems that a research team comprising anthropologists, linguists and musicologists may do useful work on the different aspects of folk music.

TABLE 18

I SARHUL					
Specimen 1			Specimen 3		
C.N.V.	C.V.K.	C.V.M.	C.N.V.	C.V.K.	C.V.M.
S—36	DSG—44	SGPD—91.70	S—31	S.G P.49	SGPD 68%
G— 8	SGP—44		R—19	DSG 49	
R— 4			G—18	MDS—35	
			M— 4		
Total 48	Scale SRG(P) (D)		Total 72	Scale SRGM (P) (D)	
II KARAM					
Specimen 5			Specimen 6		
C.N.V.	C.V.K.	C.V.M.	C.N.V.	C.V.K.	C.V.M.
S—21	SGP—31	SGPD—50%	M—33	SGP—57	SGPD—61%
		SRMD—83%	P—29	MDS—47	SRMD—51%
R—21	DSG	29	G—16	RMD—37	RMPn—68%
G—10	MDS		S—12	PnR—33	
M— 8	RMD		R— 2	DSG—30	
	nRM		D— 2	nRM—36	
			n— 2		
Total 60	Scale : SRGM (P) (D)		Total 96	Scale SRGMPDn	

### III DANR SAILA

#### Specimen 7

C.N.V	C.V.K.	C.V.M
M-11	SGP-26 (57%)	SGPD-65%
P-10	MDS-23 (50%)	SRMD-50%
S- 8	DSG-20	RMPn
G- 8	RMD -19	
R- 4	nRM-16	
D- 4	PnR-15	
n- 1		

Total 46 Scale SRGMPDn

### IV TUSU

#### Specimen 8

C.N.V.	C.V.K.	C.V.M.
S-18	SGP-41(54%)	SGPD 60%
M-16		
G-15	MDS-38(50%)	SRMD 63%
R- 9	DSG-37	RMPn
P- 8	RMD} 29	SgPn
D- 4	ngM} 28	
n- 4	PnR 16	
g- 2	SpN 14	

Total 76 Scale : SRGMPDN

#### Specimen 9

C.N.V.	C.V.K.	C.V.M.
M-24.5	MDS} 44(50%)	SRMD-66%
S-16.5	nRM}	
R-15.5	RMD-43.5	RMPN-56%
G-11	SGP-40(44%)	SGPD
g-10	DSG-37.5	SgPN
P 5.5	SgP-29	
n-4	SRR-18	

Total 90 Scale SRgGMPDn

### V NACHNI SAILA

#### Specimen 10

C.V.N.	C.V.R.	C.V.M.
S-27.5	DSG-60%	SGPD-75%
R- 16	SGP-58%	SRMD-60%
G-16	MDS-54%	RMPn-39%
P-14	RMD	
M-11	PnR	
n- 8	nRM	
R- 4.5		
d- 1		

Total 98 Scale : SRGMPdDn

#### Specimen 11

C.V.N.	C.V.K.	C.V.M.
S11.5	MDS-57%	SGMD-73%
M- 9	DSG}	
G- 7	SGP} 53%	RMDn-46%
P- 6	RMD	
D- 6	nRM	
n- 3	PnR	

Total 46 Scale :SRGMPDn

Specimen 12			Specimen 13		
C.V.N.	C.V.K.	C.V.M.	C.V.N.	C.V.K.	C.V.M.
S—14.5	MDS 66%	SGMD 76%	S—24	MDS 65%	SGMD 76%
M—12	SGP 52%	RMDn 47%	M—18	SGP 49%	RMDn 51%
P— 6	DSG		R—12	DSG	
G— 5	RMD		P—12	RMD	
M— 5	nRM		G—11	nRM	
R— 4.5	PnR		D—10	PnR	
n— 1					
Total 48 Scale : SRGMPDn			Total 96 Scale : SRGMPDn		

Specimen 14			Specimen 15		
C.V.N.	C.V.K.	C.V.M.	C.V.N.	C.V.K.	C.V.M.
S—16	DSG 65%	SGMD 75%	S—21.5	DSG 52%	SGMD 70%
D—15.5	MDS 63%	RMDn 57%	G—1.95	MDS 48%	RMDN 43%
R— 8.5	SGP 44%		M—19.5	SGP 48%	SgPn 35%
G— 7.5	RMD		D— 8.5	RMD	
M— 6.5	nRM		R— 6.5	nRM	
n— 4	PnR		P— 6	PnR	
				SGP	
P—2			n— 5.5	GPn	
Total 60 Scale SRGMPDn			Total 84 Scale SRgCMPDn		

## VI KHYAPAR DHUA

Specimen 16		
C.V.N	C.V.K.	C.V.M
S—79	MDS 107	SGMD 123 80%
R—22	SGP 103	RMDn 57 35%
G—16	DSG 99	
M—24	nRM 55	
P— 3	RMD 50	
D— 4	PnR 37	
n— 7		
Total—36 Scale : SRGPDn		

## SIKKI—FOLKART OF NORTH-BIHAR

**B**IHAR has a glorious past and its history goes back to the primitive civilization. This ancient land of Bihar consisted of four mian centres viz Vaishali, Anga, Magadh, and Mithila. That Mithila region was the centre of cultural regeneration and was confined to be the seat of imposing and elegant arts and crafts. Among the manifold works on the side of folkart, the Sikki work has been concentrated in the areas comprising Darbhanga and Muzaffarpur districts (of Bihar), has got prominence in it. These two districts have got ancient traditions. This area, in Vedic and Upanishadic period, has known as Videha (country) and its capital was Mithila. The name of Mithila is mentioned in Vedic texts, but is constantly referred to in the Epics and Jatakas. The Videha country (of the Upanishadic period) has been the centre of different crafts, since time immemorial.

In this ancient region, women are engaged in preparing desired articles out of golden-coloured Sikki grass. From the study of Vedic and Smriti literatures, we learn that Kusha ( कुश ) grass was used on auspicious occasions like marriage, puja and other festive occasions. So, the use of Sikki grass was not a new thing to the womenfolk of this ancient land.

The social customs prevalent among the rural population of Mithila has interesting traditions. In every agricultural society of different areas, the women, rich or poor, prepare baskest, out of wheat and rice straw for storing grains and other things. But in this land of Videha the use of coloured and beautiful articles was a general practice in the village-folk. There was a tradition in this region, which is still continuing, that the young maidens should know this art of Sikkiware prior to their marriages. So, marriagable girls particularly, acquire this skill from their elders. After marriage the bride has to carry the different coloured articles (locally called Bhara) prepared by herself and also by her mother and grandmother to the bridegroom's house and thereby, she is highly respected in that family. Her own articles are displayed, separately and their merits and demerits are described in comparison with the works of other daughters-in-law of the same house. Thus, in the husband's house the standard of the bride's family

is measured according to the execution, fineness and colour of the Sikki articles (brought by her). This is the reason that this craft has survived the vicissitudes of time in North Bihar.

The golden Sikki grass which grows in abundance, during the monsoon, is a kind of long stemmed grass found in the wasteland of North Bihar. In the rainy season, it reaches its full growth, and upper portion of the grass which contains the flower is removed. The remaining portion is divided into thin pieces and preserved throughout the year for making Sikki articles. After this, the grass can be dyed in many colours by ordinary process of dying. The women of the village, generally, dye it in some important native colours, such as red, black, blue, green etc. In the dying process of Sikkiware, a solution of colour and water is prepared; then the heat is applied to it. The Sikki grass is thrown in a hot solution and after a few minutes it is taken out and then spread out to dry. Hence, the women take great care in admixing the colour and using them on Sikkiware. In olden days, ladies used to prepare the colours out of natural flora such as green colour from leaves, red from red flowers etc.

The process of making different articles out of sikkiware is very interesting one. First of all, the lower portion (bottom) is made and then it is coiled up to make the articles step by step. During this process of preparation of such articles, a simple needle (called Takua) and a knife are used for this purpose. Thus, the beautiful, attractive and useful articles are made out of this golden grass.

These Sikkiware are more or less the creation of womens' imagination, influenced by traditions and religious beliefs. The Tantrika influence can be noted prominently in such works, as Bhairva-chakra, Kala-chakra etc. Some religious Gods and Goddesses are carved out on this ware such as Moon, Sun, Siva etc. Some symbolic representations also appear on this ware namely : Saptadal, Swastika, Shankha-chakra, Tri-ratna (Tilla), Pushpa-ratna (Fullia) etc. There are some other articles too, which are of daily use, such as Pauti, Mouni, Dhaukuli, Dagara, Changeri, Kosia etc. Specially Changeri is used to give sweets or other items of breakfast, whereas Pauti is used for keeping the domestic articles. Both of these two, the Changeri and Pauti have many varieties such as Panbatti-pauti, Birahara-pauti, Mandir-pauti, Virtokara-pauti, Matsya-pauti etc. and Peauliya-changery, Pana-changeri, Kosava-changeri, Matsya-changeri etc. Besides all these, even the bal-buttas, many geometrical shapes (as triangle, circle, rectangle etc.) can be noticed in this Sikki work.

If one minutely observes the above mentioned Sikki articles, one can trace easily many designs which are knitted in it and these are

locally called Kodhi ( कोढ़ी ) Chhanajhitaki ( छगनीटकी ) Darhiya ( दरहिया ), Podhiya ( पोढ़ीया ) Bayin ( बायिन ) Laheriya ( लहेरिया ) Latti ( लत्ति ) Kataral-pan ( कतरल पान ) Chhuniya ( छुनिया ) Pata-masiya ( पटमसिया ) Kharua ( खरऊआ ) Chayodiya-kosa ( छयोदियाको ). Besides one finds numerous flower designs which are locally called Chuttiyadhari-phula ( चुट्टीयाधारी-फूल ) Chituva-phula ( चितुवा-फूल ) Pat-masiya-phula ( पटमसीया-फूल ) Chavani-phula ( चवनी-फूल ) Bichhuva-phula ( बिछुवा-फूल ) Chaduan-phula ( छदुआ-फूल ) Singhari-phula ( सिङ्घारी-फूल ) and so on.

Some of these designs are traditional one. These designs are found on Harappan potteries and Punch-marked coins of ancient India. Thus, one can easily conjuncture that these ancient designs are handed down from generation to generation and today, one sees it among the village folk.

If one looks into the Maithili folksongs he will find numerous references of this Sikki work. The great Maithili poet Vidyapati has referred to this Sikki art in his poems. The gist of some folksongs are as follows :—

In conversation between the two young maidens, one said to another that we are so much attached ourselves with this Sikki work that we could not do without it. On the contrary, we have prepared thin and beautiful decorative Sikki articles, with flower designs. Further, the poet Vidyapati adds that the young girls were eager to fulfil their desires and they can not tolerate the time limit.<sup>1</sup>

In other folk-song there is a description of articles of Sikki grass namely Dala and Changeri.

In the second folksong also, the same type of idea is depicted. It relates to the conversation of two gentle ladies ; that they used to pluck the flowers in midday of Chaitra month (of Hindu calendars) and the keeping the Changeri (Sikki articles) on the head. The women say that we have plucked the flowers full of *dala* and *Changeri* (both made of Sikki grass). While they have plucked the flowers full of basket (*dala*) and Changeri the thorns of the flowers have pierced their fingers.

1. Sikki chita nahi hama jayaba sajani ge,  
Sikki nahi chorata parana sajani ge,  
Mahi mahi sikkiya bichhi bichhi chiralo,  
Sundar banalo phula doli sajani ge.  
Bhanahi Vidyapati Sunu saba sakhiyan  
Kahana purata mana asha sajani ge,  
Sikki nahi chorata parana sajani ge.

The Ladies asked O God ! who will remove the thorns from the fingers and who will remove this pain ?<sup>2</sup>

Thus the Sikkiware, the prominent folk art of Videha, has got an important place in Maithili folk literature.

The Sikki work of this ancient land of Mithila is an expression of the feelings of the womenfolk. They look at the nature, observe the flora (the plant world), study the life of animals, birds and human features. Then they design different and diverse objects on it.

The close relationship of Sikki works with the life of the people of Mithila has kept the tradition alive through many generations. An effort is now being made to revive and develop this beautiful Sikki folk-art as an industry and to persuade, the women to prepare a few articles for commercialization. A centre has already been established at Manigachi and Sursanda (Darbhanga and Muzaffarpur District) with this very purpose. In a nutshell, we can say that a Sikkiware is the spontaneous product of Mithila, imbuing the ancient folk spirit, guided and inspired by the religion and nature. It combines many qualities, taste, refinement and sense of composition of colours. The varieties differ on minute details of the artistic preparation. Hence, the tradition of the folkart, (making Sikkiware) of the ancient land of Videha has developed mostly as utility and decorative folkart. It reflects the women's great qualities of head and heart, and love for beautiful objects. Besides this, the Sikki work shows, the social customs, aspirations and beliefs of ancient traditions of Mithila. Thus, the grace and refinement of this Sikki folkart of Videha is a great contribution of Bihar to the field of folkart.

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## JUST PUBLISHED

### **VIHARAS IN ANCIENT INDIA :** a survey of Buddhist Monasteries

By Dr. D. K. Barua, M.A. Diphil. P.R.S. Ph. D. Demy size about  
300 pages, Rs. 25. Indian Publications, Calcutta-1

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2. Choti moti dhaniya sira pe changeriya,  
Kusumi lodhalo ho dupahariya ho Rama,  
Dala bhari lodhalo changira bhari lodhalo,  
kusumi lodhalo ho dupahariya ho Rama, Chatahi mase.  
Dala bhari lodhalo changeria bhari lodhalo,  
Kusumi lodhata katava gadi galo ho Rama,  
Kahi mora anguriya se katava nikali ho  
Kahi mora hari hai daradiya ho Rama ; Chatahi mase.



KARTICK CHANDRA SHASMAL

## A CASE STUDY OF BAURI MARRIAGE

IT is a study of different rites and rituals in a negotiation form of marriage among the Bauris of Hooghly district, in West Bengal. The writer has surveyed eight Bauri villages which includes 247 families covering 1,270 men and women. It is interesting to note that every castes—scheduled or upper have their priests for socio-religious activities but the Bauries have no priest. A member of their community acts as a priest.

The Bauris generally prefer marriage (*Biya*) by negotiation. Marriage by love (*Bhalabasa Biya*) are rarely found. Re-marriage of widow or divorced women (*Sanga*, or *Nika*) are widely practised by them.

Different stages of marriage by negotiation may be grouped under three headings—(A) Preliminaries, (B) Marriage and its preparatiin, (C) Post-marital rites. Some descriptions of these stages are given below.

### A. Preliminaries

#### (a) *Negotiation*

- (i) Marriage proposals are placed to the guardians of bride and bridegroom by some elderly persons of the same community.
- (ii) Inquires are made about the families of the both bride and groom,
- (iii) Selection of bride and groom after these.

#### (b) *Ashirbad*

- (i) Fixation of bride price.
- (ii) Fixation of time (*Lagan*) and date of marriage.
- (iii) Blessings are done for happy union.

### B. Marriage and its preparation

#### (a) *Marriage preparation*

- (i) 'Gae-halud' or anointment of turmeric paste and ceremonial bath.
- (ii) Erection of marriage booth—'Chhamra Tala,' it consists of

4 post covered with one or two slops and is of 2'×2'×2'. (iii) Erection of earthen platform. (iv) Starting the marriage procession. (v) 'Anchal Chauli'—Ceremonial send off the groom by the mother (vi) Reception at the bride's house.

(b) *Marriage ceremony*

(i) Hanging of 'Gua-paita' or sacred thread, with a betel nut, round the neck of the groom. (ii) Exchange of garland—'mala badal.' (iii) 'Kusum dangi' or 'Sindur dan'—application of vermilion on the 'Sinthi' or hair parting of the bride. (iv) Tying the wedding knot. (v) Ceremonial removal and rice feeding.

(c) *Send off the couple*

(i) 'Bandapan' or blessings and presentation for the couple. (ii) 'Anchal Chauli'—ceremonial send off the couple by the bride's mother.

(d) *Reception at bridegroom's house*

(i) Undoing the wedding knot and removal of 'Gua-paita.' (ii) 'Atta-pukur'—throwing away garlands etc.

**C. Post marital rites**

(a) *On the next day*

(i) 'Jore-jaoa'—the couple goes to bride's father's house.

(b) *On the 9th day*

(i) 'Dal-vasano'—removal of marriage booth into the water, in bride's father's house. (ii) Return to groom's house. (iii) 'Dal-vasano'—removal of marriage booth in groom's house.

(c) *On the 10th day*

(i) 'Jore-bhanga'—comming back of the bride to her father's house.

## II

This case study of marriage was made in 1369 B.S. in connection with the marriage of Shri Gopalchandra Das, aged 24 of village Melki. He was living with his widowed mother—Nanibala, aged 51 and younger brother, Satyacharan. His wife Arati Das, aged 17, was the daughter of

late Abaninashchandra Das of Kapilpur. When marriage proposal came to Nanibala through Durga Das of the same village, Nanibala asked the consent of Gopal who gave his consent. One day, Nanibala with Jasanbala—a neighbour went to Kapilpur to see the bride. They were cordially received by Fulmani—the mother of the bride. They selected the bride for suitable match. At the time of their departure, Nanibala requested Fulmani to see Gopal at a suitable date by going to her house. Day was then fixed. On the appointed day, Fulmani, along with her eldest daughter Angura and a neighbour came to see Gopal-chandra. They were fully satisfied with all the required informations and selected the prospective groom.

### **Preliminaries**

Getting the consent of Fulmani, Gopal's mother requested Raghunath, the village headman to see the bride. On an appointed day a party consisting of five members went to bride's house. This party is locally known as 'Jutni.' Raghunath leader of 'Jutni' asked whether the bride was 'Amdali' or 'Jamdali.' The answer came, it was 'Amdali' i.e. it is a case of regular marriage. 'Jamdali' indicates a 'Sanga' or 'Nika' marriage (widow or divorced marriage). Then Raghunath asked whether the family was 'Ayodhya' or 'Mathura' type. The other party answered that the family was of 'Ayodhya' type i.e. there is no irregularity in the family (If there is any irregularity, the answer would be 'Mathura' type). Before their departure, food and rice beer etc. were offered to them. The party then invited Fulmani and others to come to Gopal's house in return.

On a selected day the bride's party came to Gopal's house. They asked similar questions as in case of the bride. They also were duly entertained with food and drinks. They fixed up a date for 'Ashirbad.'

### **'Ashirbad'**

'Ashirbad' generally takes place in the bridgroom's house first among the Bauris. It will also be held in bride's house next. A group of men and women, five in all, came at Gopal's house in the afternoon. They carried the following articles along with a new napkin.

(i) A covered earthen vessel containing 'muri' (purchased rice) 'chira' (chopped rice), 'batasa' (sugar cake). (ii) a garland of wooden beads. (iii) 'Ghunsi'—red cord to wear at waist. (iv) A nodule of earth of the Ganges. (v) Sandle paste. (vi) Turmeric paste. (vii) A betel leaf.

(viii) Sweets. (ix) A dhuti and a ganjee.

On the arrival of the party Nanibala supplied them water to clean their feet. Sitting on the seats, the leader of the party handed over the articles, except betel leaf and sweetmeats to the head of the village, Raghunath who was specially invited to attend the function. Wearing the presented 'dhuti' and 'ganjee' Gopal appeared with a 'barandala' placing over his head. The 'barandala' contained the following article :—

(i) Some paddy (*Oryza sativa*); (ii) Durba grass (*Conodon dactylon*); (iii) Kawri; (iv) Sandle paste; (v) A 'ghot'—sacred water pot with a mango twig.

When Gopal began to move, a married woman sprayed water from the 'Mangal Ghat.' He was accompanied by his sister's husband and Raghunath. He sat on a wooden 'asana' (seat) facing east, in front of the party who came to notice him. Raghunath took off the 'barandala' from Gopal's head and placed it on the mat. Gopal bowed down his head to pay his respect. Abinash, the bride's father took a portion of sandle paste with left little finger and marked dots on forehead, neck, the backbone near head, back near waist and on two knee-joints. He blessed Gopal with some paddy and 'durba' grass. Then he offered sweets and betel to Gopal, who again bowed down to him. Abinash gave him a rupee. All who were present there, followed Abinash. Then Gopal left the place again with 'barandala.'

But before this 'Ashirbad' ceremony, there was discussions about bride price and the date of marriage. The bride's party demanded Rs. 18/- as bride price and Rs. 2/- as 'Chaukidari'—fee for village watchman. It was decided that Rs. 16/- would be paid as bride price besides Rs. 2/- as 'Chaukidari.' It may be mentioned here that there is no fixed bride price. It varies from village to village and bride to bride.

A few days later, on an appointed day, Raghunath and two other villagers came to bride's house for 'Ashirbad.' They took with them, (i) A Sari; (ii) A bliuse; (iii) One phial of coconut oil; (iv) One phial of 'Alta'—Lac-dye; (v) A packet of vermilion.

They were warmly received. A similar ritual as observed in bride groom's house, was performed bride's house too. The date of marriage and the 'Lagan' was finalised. It was decided that marriage would take place on Tuesday in the last week of Falgun (February-March).

### **Rites and Rituals**

Actual rites and rituals of marriage begins from this day. On the day of 'gae-halud'—a temporary shed called 'Chhamratala' was erected

on the courtyard of Gopal's house. It had four posts covered with a shed. Under that shed an earthen altar was made and it was cleaned with paste of cowdung. 'Gae-halud' ceremony was observed on three days before the marriage but now-a-days it is generally performed on the day of marriage. The time for this 'Stri achar' (rite of the women folk) is fixed at the evening but in the forenoon, a portion of turmeric which was touched with Gopal's head was carried to the bride's house along with the following by Gopal's sister's husband, Shyamcharan and two others (i) Sari; (ii) Soap; (iii) Mirror; (iv) Comb; (v) Vermilin; (vi) 'Alta'; (vii) A phial of oil; (viii) 'Kajal lata'—receptacle of collyrium; (ix) Garland; (x) Ghunsi; (xi) Iron bangle—'Noa'; (xii) Betel; (xiii) Betel nut; (xiv) Nine pieces of turmeric; (xv) An earthen vessel containing 'Chira,' 'murki.'

In the evening Raghunath applied some turmeric paste on the forehead of Gopal. Then married women annointed the turmeric paste on Gopal's body and gave him a 'Janti'—betel nut cutter. During this times the assembled women sing :

*"Ke halud betechhe, ke halud betechhe  
Ogo boli, darkacha halud  
Makhogo sadher bala,  
Darkacha halud" which means,*

"Who has prepared the paste from bad turmeric? Oh, dearest son, though it is bad turmetic paste, never mind in appling this on your body."

On the completion of this 'Stri-achar' 'Gopal took his bath in a nearby pond where he is accompanied by the aforesaid ladies. Taking bath, he came back home and took his meal along with the relatives. This meal is known as 'Aiburo bhat'—bachelor's meal. Similar rites and rituals were observed in bride's house.

On the marriage date at about 11 A.M. Shyamacharan and nine women took Gopal for his bath. He stood in waist deep water of the pond and made room on the surface of the water by 'Janti,' and took his bath in that imaginary room. He was then carried on shoulder by Shyamcharan. Before entering into the house, Gopal jumped seven times taking the name of the bride over the fire made of straw. Gopal was then fed with rice prepared in the house of Brahman.

In the meantime the nine accompanied women were ready to worship 'Jalma'—goddess of water. The following articles in a brass plate (known as 'Barandala') are needed for her worship :—

(i) Pradip—an earthen candle; (ii) Natai—reel on which thread

is wound ; (iii) Nara—pastle ; (iv) Betel ; (v) Betal nut (vi) Paddy ; (vii) Durba Grass ; (viii) Vermillion ; (ix) Conch ; (x) A hen egg ; (xi) A nodule of cowdung.

To put on a new sari Nanibala used to carry 'Barandala' to the pond. The nodule of cowdung was placed on an earthen ball. The egg was kept on the cowdung. The 'Natai' was kept standing by the side of it. These were marked with vermilion. She then worshipped it when the other women sing—

*"Khulo, khulo, Jalma thakurun,  
Kunchir Kapat kholo ;  
Gopaler ma esechhe,  
Tomar puja Korte"* which means,

"Oh goddess of water, please open up your door and give us water ; Gopal's mother has come to propitiate you."

And then they recite,

*"Tuku Tuku jol dao  
Jolma-thakurun ;  
Khabo na bilabo,  
Ghoti vore jol dao,  
Chheler biya debo"* which means,

"Oh mother, do favour and supply us enough water as the marriage ceremony of Gopal will be held to-day."

During this time women blew conches and made a kind of sound which is known as 'Uloo dhyan'. From there they went to propitiate a 'Sheora' tree. Vermilion marks were made on the trunk and a branch was tied with red thread from the 'Natai.' They also sing—

*"Sheora gachhe sutor khi,  
Sheora gachhe sutor khi,  
Bala go tomari baro saje,  
Tomar rani garabini,  
Jeno lal piala ase"* which means,

"Oh Sheora tree, with red thread, you are looked beautiful ; as if a newly married woman."

After their return, a white thread was tied on the right wrist of Gopal by Raghunath as he worked as priest. At 'Chhamratala' Gopal was placed on a wooden seat ('Pinri'). A 'pali' (cane pot) containing

rice and pulse was placed before him. Raghunath then placed a betel on Gopal's head and poured mustard oil on it. When the oil dropped down on the rice and pulse in the 'Pali', Gopal stirred it by betel nut-cutter. This oil mixed rice was then divided into four portions and kept in four corners of the altar of 'Chhamratala.' In the middle of the altar, a 'Kolsara' (an earthen lid covered with another) was placed. Similar rites are observed in bride's house.

### **Marriage procession**

The wedding party known as 'Barjatri' consisting of the bridegroom, headman of the village, a few relatives and friends came to bride's house in the evening. The party took the following articles,

(i) An earthen pot with water taken from a Brahman family. (ii) Two 'Vantivanr's'—one for Choukidar and other for villagers of the bride's village. 'Vantivanr' is small earthen pitcher containing sweets, covered with a lid. (iii) Two saris—one for the bride and other for bride's mother. (iv) One dhuti for bride's father. (v) One petty coat, and one blouse for the bride. (vi) Money as bride price and other expenses.

The bridegroom wore new clothes and puts on his head the marriage tiara known as 'Maur'. Before starting Nanibala gave Gopal some milk to drink and at the gate of the house, 'Anchal Chauhi' ceremony was performed. She asked 'Gopal, Where are you going?' Giving some rice from a brass plate. Gopal replied, 'I am going to bring your maid servant' and offer her some rice which he places on the 'Anchal' of her mother. It was repeated thrice. On the last turn, Gopal gave up the brass plate in his mother's 'Anchal'. So concluded 'Anchal Chauhi' ceremony. 'Anchal' means the upper portion of the cloth by which a woman covers her body.

The wedding party was cordially received at bride's house. Gopal was advised to stand on a banana leaf, when the bride's mother washed his feet with turmeric water. After taking their seat, Raghunath handed over all articles, including bride price (Rs. 16/-) and *Chaukidari* (Rs. 2/-) to bride's father, Abinash, as previously settled.

### **Ceremony proper**

The bridegroom was then taken to 'Chhamratala' where he stood on a wooden seat. Shyamacharan went to take the bride from a room where she was kept hidden. After a while, Shyamacharan carried the bride on his lap and the bride also stood on a wooden seat on the left

side of the groom. The headman who worked as priest of the bride's village handed a 'Gua-paita' (a thread is passed through the hole of a betelnut) round the neck of the bridegroom. A golden ring presented by the bride's father was put on Gopal's finger. The priest loudly uttered the marriage 'mantra'. The assembled members shouted thrice, "Haribolo". The marriage mantra is as follows :—

*"Shri Hari, Shri Hari,  
Bamun rup dhorì,  
Hanu anlen phal,  
Sita railen gachh  
Dine dine bare gachh,  
Dua dash hat  
Swarage achhe dharma,  
Marte achhe basumata,  
Gopaler Songe Aratir biya."* etc. The meaning is,

"Taking the name of Lord Hari I am performing the duty of a priest. Dharma and Basumata, you are all witness, I am giving marriage of Arati with Gopal. May their family grow like the plant brought by Hanuman and planted by Sita Devi."

Then the bride and groom was moved round the 'Chhamratala' seven times. Seven married women follow them spraying water and making 'Uloo dhyani.' At the end of each round 'baran' was offered to the groom and a woman touch a betel leaf and a pastle on Gopal's cheek. Then the bride and the groom were taken to a covered place for exchange of garlands between the bride and groom which is called 'Mala badal'. Gopal gave his garland on the neck of Arati first and Arati followed Gopal offering her own garland on Gopal's neck.

### **'Kusum dangi' or 'Sindurdan'**

The bride and groom then took their seats near Chhamratala.' The priest applied vermilion on 'Noa'—iron bangles, on 'Janti' and on a 'Pali'. Gopal placed the bangles on the left hand of the bride. According to the priest's direction Gopal applied the vermilion of the 'Pali' on the 'hair parting' of the bride. This application of vermilion is known as 'Kusum dangi'. The priest then made a knot by taking two corners of clothes—one from the bride and the other from the groom. This is known as 'Git bandha'—wedding knot. The couple then bowed down their heads and the priest sprinkled water brought from Brahman's family, on their heads and wished the happy and prosperous life of the



newly married couple. At that time, everybody present uttered 'Hari bol' thrice. The couple was then taken to a room for dinner.

On the completion of all these rites the bride and the groom sleep at a separate room. This ends the ceremony proper.

### Send off the couple

On the next morning, turmeric paste was applied on the foreheads of couple. The couple again go to 'Chamratala' and sat on wooden seats, wearing marriage tiara. The 'barandala' was taken to them. Presentations were given to the couple. This is known as 'Bandapan.' When the 'Bandapan' ceremony was over, the couple moved round the 'Chhamratala' seven times again and in each round, the bride opened the lids of earthen vessels placed on the alter of 'Chhamratala' and bridegroom placed the lids on the mouth of these vessels. On the completion of seven round they were taken to varendah and offered food consisting milk, 'chira', 'murki' etc. Then the father of the bride placed the left hand of the bride on the right hand of the bridegroom and said,

*"Dharma Sakhi,*

*Surya Sakhi,*

*amar mayeke Gopaler hate sanpe dilam"* ; which means,

'Oh Dharma, Oh the Sun, you are witnesses, I have given my daughter to Gopal.' Fulmani also did so. Then party with the couple was ready to leave bride's house. At the gate, the feet of the couple were washed by Fulmani. The couple washed the feet of Fulmani in return. A similar 'Anchal chouli' ceremony of the bridegroom's house, was observed. Fulmani asked her daughter, "Where are you going?" Arati replied, "I am going to work as a day labour." This was repeated thrice.

The bride's party consisting of a few relatives and villagers followed the couple with the following articles :—

(i) Two 'vantivanrs'; (ii) One palm leaf mat; (iii) One banana plant; (iv) A nodule of 'Gur'—country made sugar; (v) 'Biyer dan'—presented articles received by the groom during marriage.

The newly married couple was warmly received by Nanibala. The couple bowed down to her. Nanibala then gave the bride a root of water lily (*Nymphaea stellata*), the bride gave her the nodule of molasses in return. The couple was then taken to 'Chhamratala' where they stood on wooden seats. Gopal placed his left hand with a

'Pali' containing paddy on the head of the bride who stood just before him. Gopal was throwing the paddy with his betel nut cutter to enter into a room.

Similar 'Bandapan' ceremony that of bride's house was observed here. Assembled members made presentation to the couple. The couple change their clothings and put on the clothes for 'Gae-halud ceremony'.

#### **'Ata-Pukur'**

Shyamcharan dug a pit, just behind the room; for this Shyamacharan was given rice, pulse etc. The pit was filled with water and a currystone and pastle were dropped into it. The banana plant was also placed in the middle of the pit. This is known as 'Ata-Pukur'.

Raghunath, the priest took off garland, 'ghunsi' and 'gua-paita' from the person of the groom. The bride gave her garland to the priest. This was given to the groom who hide it in the water of the pit and it was the duty of the bride to find it out. This process was repeated thrice. This hide and seek is known as 'Machh lukano'—hiding the fishes. Then the couple and other members took their bath and meal known as 'Bau bhat'.

#### **Postmarital rites**

On the next day, the couple was taken to bride's house. This is known 'Jore-Jaoa' or going of newly married couple together. The couple lived there for eight days. On the eighth day, Gopal's sister—Sarala and her husband—Shyamcharan went to bride's father's house to bring the couple. They took two 'Vantivanrs'. Some presentations were given to them at the time of their departure in the next day.

#### **Nineth day**

On the nineth day after marriage, at the time of their bath, the couple gave away all articles of 'Chamratala' of bride's house into the water of the pond. This ceremony is known as 'Dal-bhasano.' After dinner, the couple, Sarala, Shyamacharan and two mtmbers of bride's family with two 'vantivanrs' started from bridegroom's house.

Similar 'dal-bhasano' ceremony was also performed in the bridegroom's house after their arrival.

#### **Tenth day**

On the tenth day, the bride alone was taken to her father's house with a 'vantivanr' known as 'Jore-bhanga-vanr'. This going is called as 'Jore-Bhanga'. The bride lives for months together in her father's house. Thus ended the marriage ceremony.

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## NOTES AND NEWS

A medieval tale of avarice, witchcraft and cruelty lies behind the alleged case of human sacrifice which has earned Kukarson, a tiny village of Agra area in U. P.

Suraj Bhan, 14, was allegedly murdered in a ritual sacrifice at the Nakti Devi temple here, dedicated to Goddess Durga. Baba Sundar Das, a priest, and Bharat Singh of Bhara village have been arrested in this connexion. Ram Singh of Tantpur, a former treasurer of the Agra City Congress Committee, who is wanted by the police, is said to be absconding.

Shaken by this incident, the villagers are afraid to leave their children alone. Attendance at village schools has dropped. When children do go to schools, parents escort them both ways. Even grown-ups prefer to stay indoors after dusk.

Situated amidst fields of yellow-flowered mustard and wheat, the Nakti Devi temple is a single-room structure of rubble with a flat roof. A tiny flag flutters atop it.

According to the villagers, the temple is "very old". A huge fair is held there every year on the darkest night of April. The idol is decorated with dazzling aluminium foils.

Within a radius of three kilometres lies a number of villages—Tantpur, Garhi, Karimpur, Bhara, Ghaskata and Basat.

According to the local tradition, the treasure of the legendary dacoit Bona (meaning pigmy), comprising gold coins worth about Rs. 40 crores, lies buried somewhere near Tantpur.

Ram Singh, who lives in a four-storeyed house in stone with nearly 100 rooms and three courtyards, wanted to find the buried treasure. Rajivir Singh, one of the relations, recalled having seen him digging near an old tank of Tantpur. Fixed on the embankments of the tank was a tablet with an inscription in a language unknown to the villagers.

Baba Sundar Das came to the village from Allahabad a few years ago and established himself at the Nakti Devi temple. Ram Singh, who befriended him, shifted his religious activities to this temple although he had earlier established another temple on a rocky mound nearby.

After a spell of penance, marked by sacrificial offering of chickens and goats, digging operations began. At least eight pits, one of them three metres deep, can still be seen near the temple.

When a villager, Raja Ram, objected to digging of his field, he was paid Rs. 200 as compensation, according to local inhabitants.

Police, reconstructing the story on the basis of statements made by the arrested persons, said human sacrifice was decided upon when the treasure could not be located after a 41-days penance during which 40 goats were sacrificed.

## REVIEWS OF BOOKS

**Developments of Libraries and Library Science in India, Subodh Kumar Mookerjee, Calcutta, World Press Private Ltd. 1969, Rs 21.50,**

In ancient and mediaeval India there were numerous libraries which were storehouse of knowledge and seat of learning as well to impart formal and informal education. Public library in the modern sense is a new force to act as the social institution. The book under review is a detailed exposition of the history of libraries and library science in India where the author states a history of the ancient and mediaeval Indian libraries as well as modern library practice in eight chapters.

The topics may be categorised in three groups : historical, non-technical and technical. In the historical part, the author discussed the history of the libraries in India from the ancient times to the modern period. The author made justice to the history by discussing the development of libraries from earliest times in the perspective of religion, education, political and social changes not only as the storehouse of knowledge but also as the seat of learning showing the impact of libraries in social life. There was a library movement in different corners of India during the last 50 years. The library association and library conferences played important roles in making the movement successful in India.

The discussion is informative, particularly the growth and development of the library association throughout India and endeavours of the Central and States governments to enact the library programmes. It is enriched with statistical tables and the chapter on copy-right contains detailed and relevant information. The most interesting topics are the history of printing in India and the history of writing, dealt with both the writing materials and the evolution of scripts and typography. The book also has a list of the early printed books in different Indian vernaculars which is an added attraction.

The author discussed a wide range of non-technical topics in the field of Library Science. The working of the University libraries, academic libraries and libraries attached to the research institutions deserve special mention. There is discussion on documentation mentioning the names of the agencies preparing documentation and abstracting services. The public library system, its idea, growth and development has also been treated with special reference to library work with children. The readers will agree with the opinion of the author that in creating the social climate and

healthy attitude towards life the social role of the library must be considered. The chapter has been discussed, mentioning in details, the Indian condition, the present and future programmes with a comparative study of the same in the European countries and the U. S. A. The author has also discussed the bibliographical services, the I. N. B., B. N. B., Indian book market, rare and banned books and reading materials project of UNESCO.

In discussing the technical topics the author gave emphasis on organisation and administration of the library including classification, cataloguing, and reference service.

The author discussed all the topics in a fascinating way. Two things should be mentioned in this respect which have enhanced the value of the book. First, his statements have been supported by statistical data and tables, reports, and secondly, he has discussed all the Indian topics compared with the state of affairs in the European countries and the U. S. A., so that the readers can get a broader perspective and also can get a view of the development in our country.

This book is very much helpful to the students of Library Science in Indian Universities and also very much interesting to the general readers to know the development of our country in the library field. The appendices are informative, particularly the Dewey Decimal Expansion for Indian Subjects will draw the attention of the librarians to classify the books on Indic subjects. Decimal Classification Scheme is not adequate for that purpose. The expansion of the present author will help the classifiers immensely. The other appendices are Report of UNESCO Study Tour, Education for Librarianship in India, Working of a District Library and Diagrammatic Representations. There is a well-prepared index at the end of the book.

Dr. Piyushkanti Mahapatra

ENGLISH PROVERBS AND PROVERBIAL PHRASES · by Apperson, George Latimer.  
A History Dictionary. London · J. M. Dent & Sons. 1920. X + 721 pages.  
Republished by Gale Research Company, Detroit, 1969. L.C. 70—76017. \$ 16.00.

The author writes in the preface "This book is a humble, offshoot of the great parent stock of the OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY. Its purpose is to trace, so far as may be possible, the history of English proverbs and proverbial phrases in English use". Thus he has collected materials for a period of over seven years from different dictionaries, proverbs collections, newspapers and other sources from 12th to 20th centuries. He has consulted nearly 3,000 different works in English.

The innovative two-way classification greatly facilitates locating a given proverb: the entries are arranged under subject and first significant word. Cross-references have been liberally supplied throughout

the work. Thus, this is not a mere dictionary but a classified of English proverbs and proverbial phrases.

Source references appear before each quotation—year, author title, volume, page, and then the quotation if it is significantly different from that heading the article. In most cases Apperson has supplied at least one quotation or reference for each century, with additional examples to illustrate varying forms of a saying.

The fifth entry under the subject "Rain" (as a verb) serves as an example :

5. It never rains but it pours. 1726 : Swift and Pope.  
Prose Miscellanies. (title of paper) It cannot rain but it pours.  
1755 : Franklin, in Works, ii. 413 (Bigelow). You will say.  
It can't rain, but it pours. 1857 : Borrow, Rom, Rye, ch.  
xxviii. 1860 : Reade, Cl. and Hearth, ch. liii. 1904 : Co.  
Folk-lore : Northumb., 171 (F.L.S.), It does not rain but  
it pours down.

The reviewer commanding this book concludes agreeing with the author—"The omissions, both of sayings and illustrations, in a work such as this, undertaken and completed by a single hand, must be many ; but as it is really the first attempt at a comprehensive Dictionary of the kind it is hoped its merit may be found more conspicuous than its deficiencies". No well-organised library can afford to miss this important publication from its collection.

S. S. G.

PASCHIMBANGER PUJA-PARBAN O MELA (Fairs and Festivals of West Bengal).  
Vol. I. ed. by Asok Mitra, assisted by Arun K Roy and Sukumar Sinha, Delhi,  
Manager of Publications, crown [44] 320 pages, 9 pages plates & 20 maps, 1969,  
Rs 9.50.

One of the main projects planned by the Census Operations in West Bengal is the publication of four volumes of fairs and festivals of the State ; the publication reviewed here, viz. 1st volume relating to the districts of five North Bengal districts (Malda, West Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling and Cooch Behar). The book contains descriptive picture of the location of hundreds of villages along with notes and details of their fairs and festivals. The data was collected by circulating questionnaire as also from the published reports in different newspapers and periodicals from time to time. In it, 84 villages of Malda, 128 villages of West Dinajpur, 102 villages of Cooch Behar, 65 villages of Jalpaiguri and 39 villages of Darjeeling are covered through 426 questionnaire. It is, therefore, interesting to note the total population of these districts along with their literacy be-

cause it will help one to guess of his own the authenticity of the book under review. The following table provides the picture :

	Population			Literacy in per centage		
	Rural	Urban	Total	Male	Female	Total
1. Malda	1,171,138	50,785	1,221,923	21.5	5.8	13.8
2. West Dinajpur	1,223,828	98,969	1,323,797	26.0	7.2	17.1
3. Jalpaiguri	1,235,478	123,814	1,359,292	27.1	10.0	19.2
4. Darjeeling	480,003	144,637	624,640	40.1	15.5	28.5
5. Cooch Behar	948,360	71,446	1,019,806	31.4	9.3	21

The present volume aims to show that the vast fairs and festivals that surround the life and living of the Bengalee community and as in volume No. 2 (Review appeared in July, 1969 issue of this journal) this volume also has maintained its pattern and get-up. In fact, the work is only nearly complete and it would be in the fitness of things for the Census Operation to make arrangements to add more important data as well as those fairs and festivals which are left out with due mention of change so as to make the work a complete one. But whatever lapses are there one cannot but congratulate the editor for his wise thought and labour on the book. Readers of the present volume will be immensely benefited and will also look forward with pleasure to the publication of the two further volumes in which the project is expected to be completed.

S. S. G.

LOKAYATA BANGALA, (In Bengali, Folklore of Bengal) by Prof. Sunil Chakravarty, Calcutta, Kalyani Prakashan, available at Indian Publications, 3, British Indian Street, Calcutta, 1, 1969, Rs. 8.00.

The book under review has four chapters such as, *lok-sanskriti* (folk culture) *lok-sangeet* (folk song) *lok-charya* (folk rituals) and *lok-chitrakala* (folk art). There are eight plates of Kalighata at the end of the book. The introduction has been written by Sankar Sen Gupta. The book attempts to tackle the subjects from the Marxian point of view and to satisfy the needs of those who are under the influence of Marxian ideology. The book can be said to be sketchy where the author wants to make the readers understand progressive forces of different genre of folklore as well as the folk life with practical criticism. Some of author's comments may be disputed, but the importance of the book cannot be belittled by that. The utility of the book has been enhanced by the addition of plates and index.

Dr. B. N. Shastri

## EDITORIAL

With this issue "Folklore" has passed another successful year of its existence for which we offer our heartiest thanks and regards to our friends, well wishers, contributors, subscribers, advertisers, and readers.

In India today, in each sphere of social, economic and political life, we are experiencing the strains and stresses inherent in the process of directed social change and economic development. It is therefore natural that such strains and stresses are reflected in the pattern of leadership in general and in villages in particular. It is true that largely leadership pattern is a function of socio-economic structure of a given society, but it has to play a positive and dynamic role in any programme of directed change. Research studies of tradition-bound, authoritarian communities like those of Indian where leadership has been long established, reveal the fact that the social distance between status groups (as between castes and classes) makes the leaders of different status group hesitant to join hands, with the consequence of that community mobilisation becomes difficult. In the context of directed social change in a society such as ours where equalisation process is at work, one would expect that in a normal course of time progressive democratic leadership would emerge in the rural areas. This has become an urgent necessity in our country in view of the fact that authority is developed and the leaders at the local level are expected to take important role in problems or rural reconstruction. But it is often observed among the folk people that the leadership in the villages is still largely authoritative and conservative being unable to mobilise the community for concerted action.

In our society, more often than not, it so happens that political, caste and economic factors get merged together and a type of a new-traditional leadership restricted to the dominant castes of the village come to the forefront. In fact, this reported by a number of researches to be the order of the day. It is found that the establishment of statutory panchyats through adult franchise has given a new role to the dominant caste. Where a caste is economically and numerically dominant, and ritually higher up its sway in the election is decisive.

Even the social educational activities are not given a fair trial. In fact, the social education functions are so important and fundamental that if properly executed, they would help develop proper social institutions and leadership. As envisaged in the beginning of community development programme, it was important and basic to all activities to create new outlook on the part of the village elite and people through social education programmes and by organising traditional fairs, festivals and the like. But they are not effectively functioning. It is again disheartening to note that the co-operative society and the school, the supposed two basic institutions of a village community, are not effective.



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# FOLKLORE

VOLUME XI NUMBER 1



SUBHOBROTA ROY CHAUDHURI

## CHRISTMAS LEGENDS AND FOLKLORE

To the people December had been the most favourable month of the year. Christ, the Light of the world, at this time born once more in the hearts of men, said Christian priests later in the world's history. And hearts of men, said Christian priests later in the world's history. And to rejoice and make merry.

OUR BEST WISHES FOR A HAPPY  
AND PROSPERS AS NEW YEAR TO ALL

**The Legends of St. Nicholas:** Nicholas, who lived in the fourth century A.D. is regarded as the patron Saint of travellers on the ocean and of children. One of the stories about him says, that he saved some sailors from shipwreck by the favour and efficiency of his prayers, and that he still keeps guard over all who voyage by sea from his place, in the heavenly kingdom. The giving of Christmas presents probably owes to the origin to St. Nicholas and also the hanging up of stockings to receive them, for these things were once done on December the Sixth, not on Christmas Day, and they were done in memory of one of the actions thought to have been performed by the Saint.

The feast of St. Nicholas was brought into disrepute in the middle ages by the rioting and irreverence that attended the election of the Boy Bishops, who were chosen on that day. The boy Bishop does his church service from December the Sixth to Holy Innocent's Day. He was even allowed to give blessings and to assist with Mass. At first the rule of Boy Bishop seems to have been carried out with soberness and sincerity and it was put to an end in the reign of Henry viii.

The children rebelled at being deprived of the fun, and of the many valuable gifts that were showered upon them. And the parents, then as now inclined to spoil their offspring, gradually adopted the habit of giving them presents at Christmas instead.

**Evil Protection by Mistle Toe:** Mistle is, in some ways, the most interesting of all the evergreens which we use for Christmas decorations. Its use at the winter festival goes far back into the past, before the birth of Christ, perhaps even before the events recorded in the Old Testament history. It was the sacred plant of the Druids and the practise of kissing beneath it is thought to be derived from an ancient Druid rite. At the winter Solstice, the Druid priests, followed by their people, went out in procession to some tree on which mistletoe grew, and with an especially consecrated sickle—said to have been made of gold—cut sprays from the plants. A bull—sometimes a human being—was sacrificed beneath the tree from which the mistle toe had been taken, after which the sprays, having been blessed by the Head Druid, were just distributed to the people, who carried them reverently back to their dwellings, and kept them to protect themselves from evil during the coming year.

**The Cattle on the Christmas Eve:** According to the information received from the British folklore and the folklore from other countries, we know that on the night of Christ's birth the dumb creatures realized the holiness of the time and joined with man in worship of the heavenly child. Cattle it was said, knelt in their stalls at midnight, bees stirred and murmured in their winter sleep within their lives, and cocks crew at intervals all night long, to scare any power of darkness that might be hovering around. References to these beliefs are to be found in the English literature. One of the best known comes in Shakespeare's play, where ghost of Hamlet's father, says :

Some says that ever 'gainst the season comes  
Where in our Saviour's birth is celebrated,  
The bird of dawning singeth all night long.  
And then, then say, no spirit can walk abroad,  
The nights are wholesome ; then no planet's shriek,  
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm ;  
So hollow'd and so gracious is the time.

**The Yule Log:** In the past one of the great events of Christmas Eve was the bringing in the lighting of the Yule Log, without which Christmas was not Christmas in our forefather's time. The ceremony goes back to the log, forgotten days, when the old Northmen worshipped Odir and Balder, and much superstition was attached to the burning. The log was

not to be lighted until dusk on Christmas Eve. Enough of the log must be saved to burn again at candlemas, and a small piece kept, as well to start the Yule fire again in a year's time. And those who actually laid the fires and set light to them must be sure to wash their hands well before doing so. That was very important part of the ceremony, for, as before doing so.

**Christmas Fare :** A few hundred year's ago, feast on Christmas Day began with a boar's head. When that was eaten, it would be followed by peacocks, chickens, pheasants, swans, vensiors, usually served with frumenty, a broth made with milk, flour, almonds, and the yolks of eggs. Those all disposed of mince pies would be brought, in and a connection known as plum porridge, which has now grown solid and become our plum pudding.

**The Bells of New Year's Eve :** In our medieval times Christmas used to be celebrated for 12 days with boisterous, pomb and mirth along with heavy feeling and drinking. A person used to called for making practical jokes which used to make an emotional romantic out burst of laughter. And to-day, as now, romantically minded men and women thought of the old year as a dying person and paused in their revels to toll the bells for its passing and also to maintain and bygone traditions.

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## ACTUALITY OF ROMANIAN FOLKLORE

### I

Sometime ago, Marcel Cellier, an authority on the folklore of Central and South-East Europe, a well-known collector and recorder of wonderful streophonic discs of Romanian folk music, issued by the Philips company, told me that, from an experience of several years he inferred that among all European folk musics, Romanian folk music is the most accessible to the modern taste.

In relating traditional folk music to the taste of the modern man, the Swiss folklorist in fact took up a particularly interesting problem, the confrontation of the values of traditional culture with the culture of the modern industrial society, the chances of some of them to coexist with it, by the quality of getting integrated into contemporary culture. When viewed in its generality, the process is extremely complex and the problems it brings forward seem to be insoluble. But when viewed in its component elements, in the immediate correlations between these elements, it gets chances of being understood. First of all commanding attention is the ascertainment that in the stratifications of the taste in the modern industrial society noticeable in certain conditions and perhaps also from a certain age is an increasing interest for the values of traditional culture, for folklore. This interest goes primarily towards the authentical folkloric forms, hence towards the folklore of those countries where these forms are still vital. They further go towards the contemporary folk achievements of these authentical traditional forms.

### II

Stemming from the ancient Thraco-Dacian culture which the antiquity mentioned many a time, and grafted with elements of Roman culture in its blooming epoch, when this culture had agglutinated many elements of the primary stock of East-Mediterranean culture, folk culture has been developing without hiatuses to this day. Hence, it has an history of more than one and a half millenium in the places where the Romanian people live also nowadays. In this span of time, the life of the people, their behaviour,—their customs—and their artistic productions pass from the context of the village communities of the principali-

ties and voivodships, to the subsequent state forms and to the unitary national state today.

In this long process the Romanian people takes over and melts in the retort of its creative spirit elements from the Byzantine or Latin-Medieval cultures, from the cultures of the neighbour Slav peoples, from the Turkish-Arabic or Western Renaissance cultures, from what we generally term modern culture. Situated between the west and the east, it succeeds in providing as an original synthesis—resting on its own culture and its creative spirit—the Romanian folk culture.

But beyond the historical data which justify the present-day interest in the Romanian folklore, stands the vivid reality of the actual wealth and diversity of this folklore that strikes not only folklore enthusiasts and tourists but also the most demanding experts.

Without attempting to give a general description I would like to single out a few facts of this wealth and diversity.

### III

Among the customs of family life, the wedding, which in the villages and sometimes also in the towns of Romania proceeds on traditional lines, is an ample ritual and a picturesque spectacle. Having a unitary pattern this ritual involves, however, distinct forms of certain episodes, also different dresses and songs and dances that lead to regional specifics. This focus of the wedding ritual today is the symbol of the dispute between the two families. This dispute, which was probably real in olden times, is illustrated in the Romanian folklore by a long allegorical poem which tells the story of "emperor" bridegroom going a-hunting and at the well, meeting a "roe deer", the bride, whom he tracks to her parents' home. Here, his envoys describe the bride as a flower that in the parents' garden "does neither burgeon nor bear fruit" and needs transplanting in the bridegroom's garden to blossom to the full.

Special episodes are in perfect correspondence with the theory of rites elaborated by A. van Gennep, the bridegroom's separation from the lads' group and the bride's from the lassies' group. The two groups accompany the bride and bridegroom throughout the ritual. Outstanding in the lads' group is "bradarul" or "stegarul", according to the region's tradition prescribing that the procession carry an adorned fir-tree or a banner consisting of cashmere kerchiefs, ribbons and little bells. The bride's separation from her father's house is marked by a ceremonial song with idyllic tones alternating with aching lyricism.

Like in all the important rituals, the union between the two families is sanctioned by an ample wedding banquet at which, the same as in the Middle Ages at the court banquets, heroic epics are still being sung. The

integration of the bride, who is the central personage of the ceremony, into her new status of wife is illustrated by a change in the ceremonial dress and especially by altering the headdress—the coronet replaced by a kerchief.

In the system of family structure, the wedding establishes new kinship not only between two families but also between these families and those who initiated the bride and bridegroom in the ceremonial, the godfather and the godmother. This sponsorship kinship is marked throughout the country by great banquets in particular days of the year when the sponsors decide to bring together their godchildren who come accompanied by a train, and sometimes noted sponsors have dozens of godchildren coming to such banquets.

#### IV

Among the traditions preserved in Transylvania are two that mark the beginning and end of agricultural works: the one celebrating the first furrow, and the harvesting tradition—that of the coronet. On Palm Sunday the group of lads chooses its leader—the one who came out first with the plough in the field—chair him through the village and confer on him the right to judge them for any negligence in the spring operations.

At the close of harvesting, the group of reapers, boys and girls make a coronet of ears and carry it with pomp and in songs to the house of the host. The coronet is sprinkled with water and solemnly handed over for safekeeping in prominence. The ears have magic virtues and are inserted in the wedding coronet. In the light of the same magic logic, the grain is meant to fertilize the ensuing year's seed.

The New Year is celebrated with great pomp in all Romanian villages and towns. In their traditional pattern, the New Year celebrations marking the passage from one vegetation period to another vegetation period, proceed for twelve days. They start on Christmas Eve and last until Epiphany. The content of these celebrations is pre-eminently, lay, and its significance is passage to and good omens for the incoming year. During the New Year celebrations, groups of children go well-wishing about the village, and groups of lads go from house to house wishing, in artful allegoric verses, happiness, and a tranquil and prosperous life to the host, his wife and children, the prospective bride or bridegroom, etc.

The good wishes for farmers are contained in the special and long allegorical poem "Plagusorul" which in a poetical but at the same time witty description relates the technique of farm operations from the first furrow to bread-baking. Plugusorul is not only a well-wishing poem but also by its construction a brief versified treatise of particular agrotechny.

## V

The Romanian folklore generally does not know of the carnival in the sense and at the date of its occurrence in the west. In exchange, the New Year's celebrations are occasions for an ample display of mask amusements. These amusements count miscellaneous masks, from symbolic representations of animals to personages specific to various trades, to certain peoples and certain contemporary situations. The procession of masks covers a wide range individually or more often in couples: men masked as brids, goats, camels, the bear and the bear leader, the bride and the bridegroom, the outgoing and the incoming year, etc.

People in some places have preserved a tradition, like in Roman New Year customs, of horse races ("incurcarea cailor").

## VI

Viewed from the angle of the spectacle, besides that of traditions from which we have mentioned only a few, also noteworthy are the dances. In very many villages, there is the tradition, like in the old days, of the Sunday afternoon dance. The hora, or "jocul" as this dancing is termed, is an event in which all the village takes part, the youngsters for the dance, the married women and especially the mothers to watch and comment, and the men to chat and discuss community affairs. The typological variety of the Roman folk dances is very ample both vertically in the context of the all-country repertory and also vertically in the repertory of a single village. Oltenia counts villages that have preserved over 40 dances in their repertories.

## VII

Worthy of note are also the diversified folk instruments. The Romanian people has created a wide range of instruments. The range of folk music instruments goes from pseudo-instruments like the pear leave or the birch bark, and fish scale, up to the accordion and saxophone today. Among the wind instruments are about 15 kinds of pipes, 5 kinds of alphorns, clarinet and so on. Worth mentioning among the string instruments are the dulcimer, folk guitar, fiddle, etc.

The widest spread of these instruments is certainly the pipe. Everyone can make a pipe with a certain degree of sonority. But top-quality pipes are made by artists with long practice. Some of them have attained veritable manufacturing standards. The Hodac village, of Reghin district, Transylvania, is noted for its pipes—10,000 manufactured every year and sold all over the country.



The doina (a nostalgic folk song) is today considered as a specific genre of the Romanian folklore. But developing parallel to the doina and sometimes steaming direct from it in the Middle Ages and in the modern period is the lyrical song proper: the love song, the fate song and the chance song, the estrangement song, the songs of social protest, etc. The Romanian lyrical song has a regional melodic variety that resembles the one I mentioned above.

### VIII

These were only a few aspects of the Romanian folklore. Discussing of all categories and detailing of all aspects is difficult. I hope, nevertheless, that these few remarks on Romanian folklore will arouse the interest of enthusiasts and experts. Through acquaintance with the Romanian folklore not only leads to delving into the history of European culture but can also help formulate hypotheses as to the ways of integrating the folklore into contemporary culture.

*Director of the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore, Academy of Sciences, Bucharest.*

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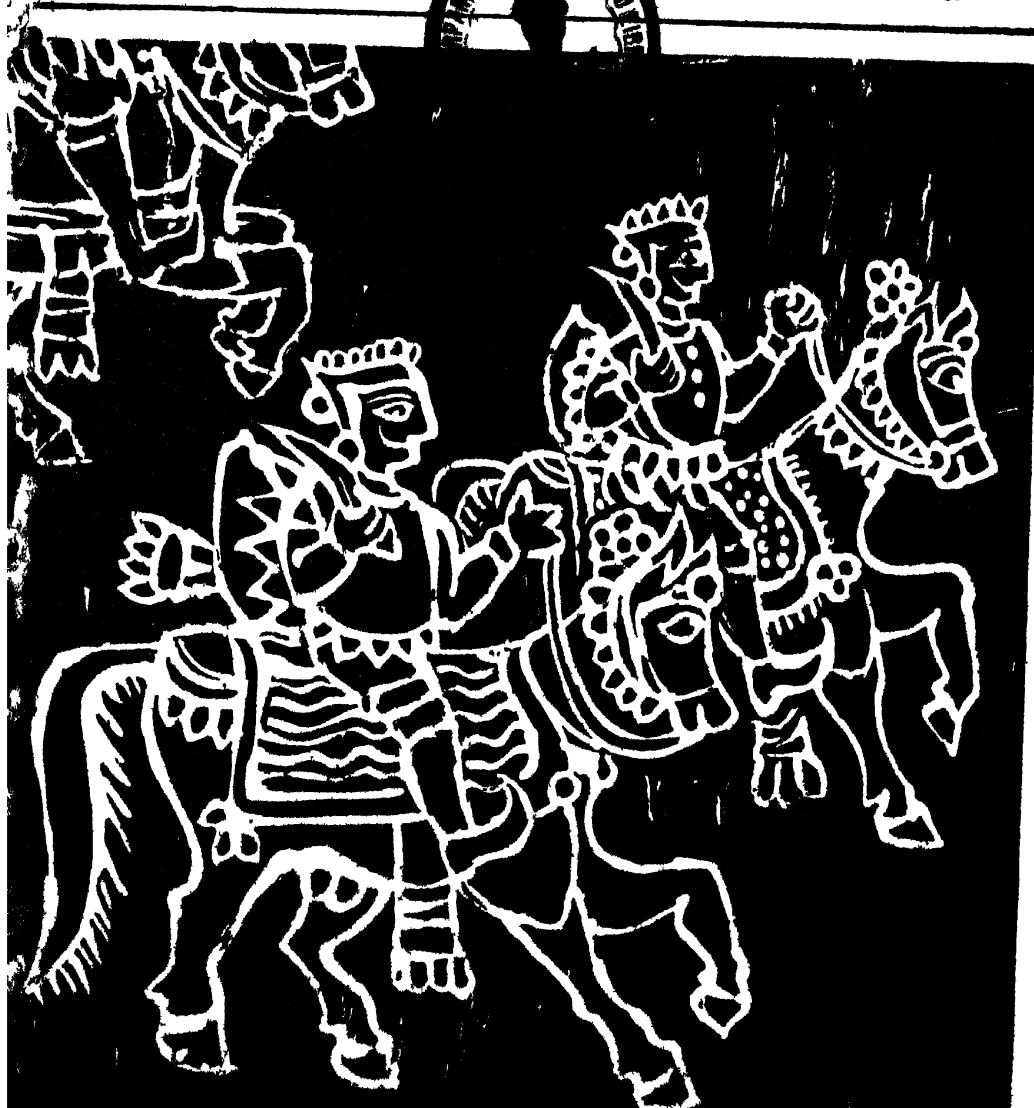
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# FOLKLORE

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SEM TOPNO

## ROMANTIC LIFE OF THE EPIC HERO KRISHNA AS DEPICTED IN THE FOLK SONG OF MUNDAS

It is a matter of amazement as to how the Epic heroes became popular among the folk. The fact is that the folk came in to contact irregularly with different races having diverse cultures. The impact of these cultures are seen in every aspect of life. Even the folk song is not immune. Many religious groups, such as Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and Christianity have come into contact with them, but the former two have left no relic among the people. Kabirpanthi and Vaishnav Sects of Hinduism have got little success. Some preachers of Vaishnav Sect visited Chotanagpur occasionally and preached their religious doctrines among the tribal people. They learnt the tribal languages and composed folk songs with the theme of their religious doctrines. They introduced Hindu gods and goddess through these songs for the purpose of planting Hindu religion among them. So, this kind of songs are nothing but foreigners' clad in native dresses. The names of these Vaishnav preachers are found in folk songs. The most popular of them are Binandas, Kishun Ray, Budu Babu, Sukhdeolal and Budan Singh.

Whether the Mundas, Hos, Santals and other Proto-Australoid tribes have prior contact with the Epic heroes, Rama, Krishna and others before settling in Chotanagpur, we cannot say definitely. But the reality is that the composers of these folk songs have so vividly portrayed the Life of Epic heroes that they seem to be tribal in character and behaviour. Their lives are as simple as the folks themselves. Thus, these preachers have partly succeeded in planting the seed of love for Epic heroes among the tribals. In this present paper the author's purpose is to reveal the romantic life of Krishna as depicted in Mundari folk song. These songs have been selected from W. G. Archer's book, "Munda Durang" from the section of Karam songs.

Krishna is a grown up youth. He has an attractive personality. He takes much delight in playing on flute. He can produce such a melodious

sound that every one has to stand to hear it. Gopinis love him deeply. They are anxious to see him. The poet has rightly expressed in the following songs :-

By the stream, under the Sanko tree, listen to him.  
He is playing on flute day and night, let us go to see him,  
Let us go all girls in pairs,  
He is playing on flute day and night,  
let us go to see him. (1004)

Below is another song similar to this :—

O' girl, you are going to fetch water from river Jamuna,  
O' virgin girl, how melodious your too rings are ringing.  
He is singing 'tiri-riri' with his flute,  
And laughing like the flooded river's sound,  
O' virgin girl, you were intoxicated to  
hear the song. (1003)

Krishna is a romantic hero. He is loved by all girls of Braj, married and unmarried alike. The sound of flute acts as hallucination to Gopinis. When they hear the sound of flute, they become restless and stealthily keep out to meet him by the bank of river Jamuna in Brindaban. By the following songs we can know how restless Gopinis are for him :—

O' 'Sahiya', give up food and drink, let us meet him.  
He is playing on flute taking name of Radha,  
In the forest, under the shade of black  
berry tree, let us talk together.  
He is taking thy name from his flute. (940)

Gopinis are so mad in love that they cannot understand the simple fact too. When they hear the sound of flute, they consider it to be their names, and all the girls come out to meet him. Following is the song in illustration of this fact :—

From where the sound of flute is coming ?  
Hearing the sound of Radha, Radha, fresh  
smiling young girls are coming out.  
Upon the branched Kadam tree of stream way-side,  
he is sitting.

---

Numbers by the end of each stanza are serial numbers in the book "Munda Durang".

He is playing on flute sitting there,  
 I have dropped engraved comb on the stream's  
 sand under Kadam tree.  
 Caring for nothing, hearing the sound, fresh  
 smiling young girls are coming out. (976)

Married girls are not obeying their husbands and unmarried their parents. Girl who is in strict control, deceives his parent saying that she has lost her comb and is going to get it or she is going to meet her Sahiya etc.

Krishna is loved by every one. When he sees any girl or group of girls, he makes sound or approaches to her or them. He is very often found in the spot where girls generally visit daily. Following is a song of such an event :—

From where he came and sat by the stream ?  
 Radha, Radha, is the sound of flute, I am  
 ashamed of hearing it.  
 Hearing the sound all the Sakhis stood motionless.  
 O' don't play on so,  
 Tell someone to ask him, why he is playing so,  
 I am ashamed of hearing it. (963)

A girl by chance met Krishna by the stream. She fell in love with him in first sight. Now she is so anxious to meet him again that she decides, whatever trouble may be fall on me, I shall still love him. Following is the song of this theme :—

I went to fetch water from river Jamuna,  
 I was shot at heart with the arrows of five flowers  
 of Modan,  
 It has become difficult to me to return home as I  
 have been struck by the bossom. (1039)

Following is a song in which a girl has expressed that love is like a current of the river. She will love Krishna even if she will have to give up her caste and clan. The poet has cleverly put the two characters. Radha and Krishna, among tribals to be loved by them.

O' Lolita, I am burning with the arrows,  
 I am burning without fire,  
 I am being taken away by the current of love,  
 For him, I shall give up my caste and clan,  
 O' Radha and Krishna I am in the 'current  
 of your love. (1089)



Gopinis are so much in love that they meet him even in dream :—

Parent's love is great but  
greater is the love for Krishna,  
I dreamt last night,  
You look like bright light, stood before me shining,  
O' the flute holder, my heart is burning to see you,  
You have blue dresses which look like burning,  
O' the flute holder, my heart is melting for you. (943)

Gopinis of Braj are taking their bath in the river Jamuna keeping their dresses by the bank. Merrily they are playing in water altogether forgetting the presence of Krishna. He takes away all their clothes and put it on a branch of Kadam tree from where he watches them. He plays on his flute and the attention of the girls is drawn towards him. They are very much ashamed of as they were all nude. The poet has put this fact in the following song :—

O' Bhagwan, you are upon the Kadam tree,  
Tiri riri is the sound of your flute,  
O' Bhagwan, let us have our dresses quickly,  
We have to go to collect flowers to make garlands,  
We shall be chided by in-laws and all others in Braj.  
Kishun Ray<sup>1</sup> is singing this memorable song. (1223)

It is said that Krishna and Gopinis of Braj used to dance in the great Brindaban. Here is a song in which the mass dance is the main theme. The poet wants to visit the place where they were dancing :—

I shall go to Brindaban to participate in mass dance.  
All have gone, I am alone behind,  
Six hundred Gopinis are dancing.  
I shall go to Brindaban and play on 'Durang' and 'Kartal',  
Amidst six hundred Gopinis, who are dancing. (1062)

Below is one more song of this theme :—

In the mass dance everyone is exhibiting  
her own style of dance.  
O' look them friend, all are dancing in pairs to and fro.  
The sound is being heard 'garam' and 'girim'.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Kishun Ray is the vaishnav preacher who is the composer of this song.

<sup>2</sup> Sound of drums.

Vermilion on head and jingri on leg look beautiful  
Badu Babu says it is a nice dance. (1170)

There is the other aspect of pleasures and merriment too. Krishna goes to Mathura leaving Gopinis in Braj. This casual leave of him has cast gopinis in the sea of sorrow. The usual dance and merriment have suddenly been stopped. There is no laugh in Braj. The environment is quite silent but fire is burning within ashes. Every gopini is moaning. Following is the song on the unexpressed anxiety of gopinis :—

O' sister, your heart is burning for the shade  
O' sister, no one visits the shade,  
All people see the burning hill,  
But who is seeing my burning heart ? (973)

How deep is the sorrow of gopinis. They are yearning for Krishna. Their heart is burning. They are unable to suppress their love for him. In the following song, a gopini suggests to others that all should go there where he has gone :—

To where has gone the garland of Braj,  
Took away all the art of merriment,  
O' 'Sahiya', let us visit him,  
If we shall not go to-day,  
I shall die,  
Fire is burning in my heart.  
O' Sahiya let us visit him. (950)

The gopinis are weeping day and night for Krishna. They are cursing their own fate sometimes for their inability to stop him from going or speak ill to an unknown person whose acts must have caused their separation. Now they don't know what to do.

Where he went, friend, I did not notice him  
I am shedding tears day and night, where he went ?  
I wanted to meet him, where he went ?  
Some jealous person has done wrong to me, let  
tiger may eat him,  
We were of one body and heart.  
Who has done wrong to me, leaving my world dark ?  
O' my life, my heart is burning for you  
My eye sight has gone away in long waiting  
And my world has become dark. (982)

So, every girl is sad. Most of them have lost faith in life and want to die any way.

From where the wind blow, it brought news ?  
Inside the bosom of my heart is trembling,  
Where my heart lies ?  
O' Bidhi,<sup>1</sup> what have you done to me ?  
You have given me much trouble in my youthful age ?  
There are sands and deeps in stream,  
I shall drown myself in it. (983)

At this hour of grief, there is none to give them words of consolation. A person in trouble generally prays to God and tells him his trouble so, do, these gopinis pray to Krishna. Following is the song of this theme :—

For you my tears are rolling down,  
O' friend, don't you remember us ?  
I have not taken food all the day, my heart is burning  
day and night,  
O' beloved Prabhu,<sup>2</sup> don't you remember us ?  
I have a sorrowful heart, flies here and there like vulture.  
O' friend, how deep is my sorrow at this age ?  
Hence from it will continue my life long,  
Badu babu says, how long will you remember (924)

Grief has overflowed in Braj. No girl is in happy mood. All gopinis are restless. They are waiting for the return of Krishna with heavy hearts. Some are so much upset that they go to diviners to know about Krishna. This has been expressed by the poet in the following song :—

Badu Babu<sup>3</sup> went there, where he is ?  
Sukhdeolal<sup>3</sup> is searching in panjee.  
In the forest, Budan Singh<sup>3</sup> has made a hut for him,  
Budu babu is there,  
Our Gopal is there,  
He is learning songs from Budan Singh. (977)

1 Fortune giver.

2 Lord.

3 Badu Babu, Sukhdeolal and Budan Singh all are vaishnav preachers. They are also the composers of songs.

So, is the consolation. Below is another song :—

Where our humourist went ?  
He is no where seen,  
He is composing songs with Budu babu,  
So, he is not coming,  
How long will they compose songs ? (975)

The extreme lamentation has been expressed in the following song :—

Brindaban and neighbouring country is burning,  
Hills and valleys are burning all people are seeing,  
Streams, revulets and sands are burning with water,  
The earth is burning. all people are burning. (1148)

Thus, the whole country of Braj is burning. Krishna too, remembers gopinis. He knows that gopinis must be in grief, so, he sends his friend Udho to Braj. As soon as he arrives at Braj, gopinis surrounded him and put many questions to him. It has been expressed by the poet in the following way :—

I have come from Mathura to Gokul,  
O' friend, does he remember us ?  
Budu babu says, friendship and love cannot break,  
O' friend, I shall not desert you. (1160)

In these songs the gaily life of Krishna has been depicted nicely in Mundari language. The expression ably reveal the gentle feelings of gopinis. The delicate love and unberable pang of separation are indescribable by words but the folk poets (i.e. vaisnav poets) have applied proper words to express them without affecting the feelings. There is no concealment in the expression of love among the tribal youths as have been revealed in these songs. Like the birds of the air, they are heard singing songs in hills, forests, dales, by the river banks and in fields. So, the 'Vaisnav' preachers have secured proper place among the tribals through these songs.

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# HUMAN EVENTS

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## FOLK-DEITIES OF TELANGANA

In the ritual organization of the village communities of the Telangana region of Andhra Pradesh, the folk-deities occupy as much a place of importance as the deities of great tradition of Hinduism. As distinguished from the All-India deities derived from the written Sanskrit literature of the Hindus, the folk-deities are essentially non-literate deities of local or regional spread, embodied in oral tradition. The cults and worships of these two categories of deities are so inextricably intertwined that the villagers do not commonly consider them to be mutually exclusive. The object of this paper is to describe, in a very brief manner, the important folk-deities of Telangana and to indicate their significance in the life and living of the rural population.

The cults and worships of the folk-deities as they prevail in this part of rural India are characterized by certain note-worthy features. These are :

- (1) The rituals and ceremonies connected with the folk-deities do not require a Brahmin priest but are conducted by either a Kummammar (potter) or a Muttracha Talari (a traditional village functionary belonging to an agricultural caste). It all depends upon the village concerned as to who enjoys the hereditary right to officiate as priest.
- (2) Not all folk-deities are represented by carved images or idols. Nor are all of them appositely installed in properly erected structures (shrines).
- (3) The folk-deities (which are animistic in character) are invariably appeased with offerings of flesh, blood and liquor.
- (4) Even the Brahmins and Vaishyas who are vegetarians by tradition, reverse the folk-deities and occasionally propitiate them with sacrifices of goats and sheep which are slaughtered and partaken of by their non-vegetarian servants or menials on their behalf.
- (5) It is generally believed that the folk-deities presiding over different phenomena of life and nature inflict misery and suffering on human beings when displeased by neglect of worship or unfulfilled vows.
- (6) Finally, the folk-deities are supposed to express their wishes and demands through the medium of a shaman or some other

man or woman who, as a rule, goes into trance and speaks out the words of the deity concerned in the first person.

A host of deities which are believed to dominate different aspects of man's existence are worshipped by the people of Telangana. The principal among these are as follows :

1. Pota Lingamiah, the protector of the village territory or the village guardian deity. No shrine is constructed for this deity who is represented by a large slab of stone set up in a central place in the village. He is the premier folk-deity and his propitiation precedes that of all others. In the month of Ashadha (June-July), when the villagers collectively propitiate most of the folk-deities, Pota Lingamiah is worshipped with offerings of cooked rice, curds and jaggery. Again, whenever an epidemic breaks out in the village and the deity presiding over the epidemic concerned is jointly propitiated by the villagers, Pota Lingamiah is invariably worshipped.

A peculiarity about the cult of Pota Lingamiah is that except the Potrajas no one else sacrifices animals before the deity. The Potraja is a religious functionary dedicated in the name of an animistic god or goddess and is an integral part of the cults and worships of the folk-deities. On the occasion of the collective worship of a folk-deity by the villagers, the Potraja, his body besmeared with turmeric and waving a thick rope whip, goes into trance and tears the throat of a goat or sheep with his teeth and dances ecstatically in honour of the deity. The Potrajas who are drawn from different Shudra and untouchable castes, regard Pota Lingamiah as their tutelary deity.

2. Uradamma, the goddess presiding over the fortunes and well-being of the villagers, is represented by an idol or piece of stone bedaubed with vermilion and turmeric (surrounded by heaps of stones on three sides) usually set up at some prominent point in the village. Propitiation of this deity is done collectively by the villagers. Along with the offerings of cooked rice, curd and jaggery, goats, sheep and fowls are sacrificed in honour of this deity. Once in three years, a he-buffalo is ritually slaughtered in the name of Uradamma, with a view to ensuring the overall welfare of the community.

3. Maisamma, the goddess protecting the village tank, village fortification and agricultural prosperity of the village. This deity, in a shrine, is represented by an idol made of wood or stone which is dressed in white or yellow sari-like garment and smeared with vermilion and turmeric. The deity is revered by all villagers and worshipped especially on Sundays and Thursdays. In the month of Ashadha, Maisamma is propitiated on a large scale with offerings of goats, sheep, fowls and sometimes buffaloes. In the years when there are bumper harvests, the agriculturists slaughter goats, sheep and fowls in honour of Maisamma as a token of gratitude.

4. Pochamma, the goddess of smallpox is represented by a wodden or stone idol installed in a shrine. The idol is dressed in yellow or white sari-like garment with spots of turmeric and vermilion applied all over the body. These spots symbolize the pock marks, as the deity is believed to preside over smallpox. Pochamma is one of the most acutely feared and honoured folk-deities of Telangana. She is worshipped by all villagers irrespective of their caste, individually and collectively. If a person has an attack of smallpox, his or her family worships Pochamma everyday by pouring libations of water or palm juice. On recovery, a goat, sheep or fowl is sacrificed in her honour and jaggery is offered to the donkey which is regarded as her vehicle. When smallpox breaks out in an epidemic form, the entire village appeases the deity with sacrifices of goats, sheep, fowls and buffaloes. Regular propitiation of the deity is done annually with elaborate rituals and offerings of cooked rice, curd, jaggery, fried gram and a special sweet dish along with those of flesh, blood and liquor.

5. Mutyalamma, the deity presiding over chickenpox is lodged in a properly erected shrine in the form of an idol made of wood or stone. She is annually worshipped by the villagers along with Pochamma, in the same manner and with the same offerings. In addition to the annual worship, propitiation of Mutyalamma is done on a large scale with sacrifices of goats, sheep, fowls and buffaloes when chickenpox spreads rapidly and attacks many people. In case of attack of chickenpox, the family of the patient concerned, daily offers libations of water or palm juice at the shrine of the deity and sacrifices a goat or sheep or fowl on recovery.

6. Mahankalamma, the deity presiding over cholera is very much similar to Pochamma and Mutyalamma both in respect of iconography and procedures of propitiation. Besides the routine annual propitiation, this goddess is appeased on a grand scale when cholera breaks out in an epidemic form by slaughtering goats, sheep, fowls and buffaloes in her name.

7. Ellamma, the goddess worshipped for the cure of boils and soreness of eyes is represented by an idol (of stone or metal) or a piece of stone installed in a shrine. The shrine of this deity is usually under a tree and by the side of an ant-hills. She is worshipped especially on Sundays, Tuesdays and Fridays and offerings of cooked rice, curd, vegetable curry and sweets are made to her. She is also propitiated with sacrifices of goats, sheep and fowls and libations of palm juice.

8. Durgamma, the goddess protecting children is represented by a stone idol bedaubed with turmeric and vermilion and lodged in a shrine. Durgamma is generally honoured on Sundays and Fridays. In the month of Ashadha, she is collectively propitiated by the villagers. Apart from

the standard vegetarian dishes which are offered to other folk-deities, sacrifices of sheep, goats and fowls are offered to Durgamma, invoking her blessings for the children of the village.

9. Balamma, the goddess whose wrath is supposed to cause illness among children and sterility among women is not represented by any idol or piece of stone. In fact, nothing is found outwardly in any village to symbolize or indicate the existence of this deity. The remarkable fact about Balamma is that unlike the other folk-deities, no collective propitiation of her is done by the villagers. The villagers appease her with offerings of vegetarian dishes and sacrifices of goats, sheep and fowls within the house. A lump of earth, conical in shape and debauched with vermilion and turmeric, or a doll wrapped in white cloth and besmeared with turmeric is installed in a niche in the innermost portion of the house and honoured in the name of the deity.

10. Pinamma, the goddess who wards off evils and safeguards prosperity has no carved images or shrine. Like Balamma, Pinamma is worshipped within the house and no propitiation is done by the villagers collectively. As a rule, a she-goat or she-sheep which is pregnant is slaughtered in honour of the deity. There is no fixed day for the propitiation of Pinamma. The villagers generally honour her in times of misery and suffering, on the eve of a marriage in the family and when the death of an adult occurs in the family.

The above-mentioned folk-deities constitute only a small section of the numerous lesser gods and goddesses of limited regional and local distributions which the rural people worship in different contexts and in different phases of the annual cycle of agricultural activities. It is worth nothing in this connection that the folk-deities are worshipped by the villagers under three categories: (1) as village deities—worshipped collectively by all castes or by individual households at the shrine or abode of the deity in the village or within the house, (2) as caste deities—honoured by the members of a caste jointly or by individual households at the shrine or abode of the deity in their caste ward or within the house, and (3) as household deities—worshipped within the house because the deities concerned are strictly household deities whose shrines are kept within the house.

In this context it is necessary to point out that while some deities are specific to a caste, some others are worshipped both as village deities and caste deities. Further, it should be understood that not all the folk-deities worshipped in Telangana are unique or indigenous to the region. Some of the folk-deities (for example, Pochamma, the goddess of small-pox, are of wider spread and may be identified in different linguistic-cultural regions under different designations.

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MALTI AGNIHOTRI

## ZAWLPALA AND TUALVUNGI

ONCE upon a time, a handsome youngman named Zawlpala was married to a charming girl named 'Tualvungi.' They loved each other very much. After a few days of their marriage, the king of the plain named Phuntiha,<sup>1</sup> living in the vicinity, in the course of his itinerary happened to see the couple, while Zawlpala was searching for lice on his beautiful wife's head seated on the platform in front of their house. The king was charmed by the beauty of Tualvungi<sup>2</sup> so much so that he enquired of Zawlpala about his relationship with her, asking "Oh, is she your wife or sister?" Zawlpala, boasting the beauty of his wife replied, "She is my sister." Phuntina became so infatuated with the charm of the woman that he came out with an abrupt proposal : "If so, I will marry her, and how much I will be required to pay as the bride price."<sup>3</sup> Zawlpala replied in terms what he thought it be above the means of the man, "Gayal<sup>4</sup> so numerous as to tie up in all the posts of my house ; necklaces having so much weight that can break off the Thuamban,<sup>5</sup> Daos<sup>6</sup> numerous enough so as to tuck in every bamboo piece fastened in the bamboo wall ; and clothes numerous enough to break off my Tlangba.<sup>7</sup> He thought that such things meant for her price would be above the means of the man who enquired of the price. But in spite of that, Phuntiha prevailed upon the price quoted and said "All right, I will marry her." Had Zawlpala said at that time, that it was a mere joke and that she was his wife, things would have been different ; but he did not say so. Thereupon Phuntiha returned home

1. Phuntiha :—the name of the large male swallow-tail butterfly. The female is known as Tualvungi.

2. Tual-Vungi :—the name of a large female butterfly, the male of which is called Phuntiha. The Mizos believe that butterflies are reincarnations of human beings and that Phuntiha and Tualvungi were husband and wife when they were in the flesh.

3. Among Mizos, there is a custom as to when a man want to get married, he must first of all settle the bride price.

4. Gayal :—a domestic animal.

5. Thuamban :—a post for hanging necklaces bracelets and ornaments.

6. Dao :—a large knife with wooden handle used for cutting wood etc.

7. Tlangba :—a rail for hanging things upon.

and prepared himself for the impending marriage with the materials needed for the price. And, after a few days with a large number of his subjects, he came to marry Tualvungi. Tualvungi, having seen such a big party approaching towards their village at a far-off distance plunged in anguish and said :

“Carrying in hands such number of clothes,  
Say, she is pregnant,  
My lover, Zawlpala.”

No sooner than Zawlpala thought of any other means, the party arrived and began to busy themselves in paying off the price for Tualvungi by tying up the gayals in all posts and subposts, the daos were tucked in all the notched bamboo pieces of the wall, clothes were hung on the Tlangba which ultimately broke off and same also happened with necklaces which broke Thuamban. Zawlpala recalled what he had done and repented but he could not do anything. On the contrary he had to part with his wife whom he so dearly loved. And thus Tualvungi was taken off by the King's party. He was mournfully looking at the receding party and said, “What a mistake I have committed,” and, since then he felt very lonely. Tualvungi, now very much bewildered and saddened, was compelled to go ahead with a deep feeling of solitude and loneliness.

Before many years had gone by, Zawlpala unable to bear his loneliness any longer, visited the village where Tualvungi was putting up and lodged himself in her new house. Tualvungi gave a piece of advice to the effect that he should be very careful in taking and eating anything that Phuntiha might serve to him, least it should be injurious for him. But as ill-luck would have it, Zawlpala ate the things that Phuntiha offered to him such as Bahem and Zu<sup>8</sup> while Tualvungi was absent and busy in collecting the fuel. Bahem and Zu were the things omitted by Tualvungi among the things she advised Zawlpala not to take. When Tualvungi returned home, she asked Zawlpala, “What things did you eat to-day?” “Bahem and Zu,” replied Zawlpala. Tualvungi regretted and said, “Why did you eat? The sooner you go back home, the better it would be for you. Now, go home immediately.” Zawlpala, then hurried home. As soon as he reached home had severe stomach pain and succumbed to it in a minute later and he was buried. Gayal's horns were hung over his grave as a mark of respect to the departed soul.

8. Zu—Beer or any fermented liquor.

Later on the villagers ventured to call Tualvungi. But who would call Tualvungi? They tried to find the most suitable creature for the job. Thereupon the Crab came and they asked "Carb, will you be able to call Tualvungi?" In reply she said "Yes." And they asked her, 'How will you do?' and she said 'I will do Ai Ai.' "Oh, you don't know at all." So saying, they trampled it under their feet and the manner of its walking became sideways ever since. Thereafter the crow came to them. They asked, "Crow, will you be able to call Tualvungi?" and he said "Yes." If so, what will you do?" asked they, and he said "I will do Ak Ak" "Ah, you don't know what to do" and poured over her boiled indigo leaves' water and she became and since then she became black.

Later on came a bird called Bulbul and again they asked "Berha,<sup>9</sup> will you be able to call Tualvungi?" and she replied "Why not?" "If so how will you do?" She said "I will do Berek Berek Kuai Kin Lut." "you don't know at all" so saying they pierced its belly through the pointed piece of bamboo fencing and she died instantaneously and as a result its cressum<sup>10</sup> became red ever since. At last a wood pegeon came and they asked "Huia," will you be able to call Tualvungi?" And it replied "Of course Yes." "And how will you do?" said they. She replied "I will do. . . Hui hui e ka te te hui hui e." Now Zawlpala is dead; "Go Tualvungi, to pay him the last homage." The wood pegeon was chattering in the most impressive and expressive voice. Oh, you are quite well up in calling Tualvungi" and they fed her with food and meat with full satisfaction.

Thereupon the pegeon flew up in the air to call Tualvungi and sat on the tree standing near Tualvungi's house. Tualvungi was weaving a loin cloth in the verandah of their house and heard the bird setting the tune enticing her.

"Hui hui e, ka te te hui hui e,  
Now Zawlpala is dead, Go, Tualvungi, to pay him the last homage"

Thereupon, Tualvungi implored the pegeon to set the tune again to check up if she was the person meant by the bird "If you actually called me, come and sit down on the Tlangba and repeat your words again." The pigeon then sat on the Tlangba and set the tune in an enticing manner. Tualvungi again implored her "If you actually call me, come and settle on the bar of my loom and set the tune." The

9. Berha—Bulbul

10 Cressum—the feather under the tail of the bird.

11. Huia—Wood pigeon.

pigeon then sat on the bar of the loom of Tualvungi and set the same tune, most enchantingly and pathetically. "You are a iresome stranger coming to call on me" so saying she gave a good meal to the pigeon with food and meat. Then Tualvungi resolved to go to Zawlpala's village at once and prepared the necessities for the impending journey. But Phuntiha would not allow her to go. The following day, Phuntina was going out on some work ; somehow he had an unnecessary apprehension that Tualvungi would go away in his absence ; so, he had a dao placed intentionally at the door with the blade upwards so as to cause Tualvungi to trample over it. Tualvungi arranged to go while Phuntiha was out and had her foot cut with the dao. She took out her new clothes from the thul,<sup>12</sup> tore up some cloth and bandaged her wounded part, soon after she left taking with her. Zawlpuan,<sup>13</sup> some Kawi<sup>14</sup> and other important items.

After some time, she reached a certain village and there she saw children playing a favourite game with Kawi. She asked the playing children.

"You who stick o'en cattle wave  
Have you seen my husband's grave"

Children replied in group.

"On your loved one's resting place,  
A flower red profusely grows  
Hunging tropies stand in rows."

She threw some Kawis before them over whose possession they quarelled. After having gone a far off distance, she saw children looking at the bull-gayal and questioned those children.

"Yonder children gazing at the bull-gayal<sup>15</sup>  
Dont thou seest my Zawlpala's grave"

12. Thul—the name of a large basket with a close fitting conical lid or cover. This basket is used as receptacle for yarn, new clothes, and other precious possessions.

13. Zawlpuan—the name given to a cloth generally blue which a bride brings to her husband upon marriage. Sometime she brings the blue yarn instead, and weaves the cloth for him after marriage. Should the husband divorce his wife, this cloth has to be returned to her.

14. Kawi—the large bean—like seed of the Entanda scanders or Eutade pursoetha—a thick woody creeper known to the Mizos as Kawi hrui. The Kawi bean is used by boys and girls to play one of their favourite games with.

15. Bull gayal—domestic animal belong to the family or Mithun.

Those children in reply said

“Over the graveyard of Zawlpala, thou shall find  
A blooming Tuantuah<sup>16</sup> with its scarlet flowers.  
And horns of wild animal hung up in a row.”

She threw up the string meant for a gayal among them and the children quarrelled for its possession. At last, she reached Zawlpala's grave and she cried in grief with tears flowing down her eyes. One old woman consoled her and entreated her not to cry. But Tualvungi requested the old woman, “Madam, kill me and have everything which is in my possession; I believe I cannot live any longer.” The old woman said “All right,” so saying, they unearthed the grave and found only the bones lying. Besides the bones, Tualvungi laid herself down and said “Zawpala, move a little bit, there is no room for me to sleep.” Immediately, Zawpala's bones got collected in a place. Thereupon the old woman killed Tualvungi.

Phuntiha in a fit of uncontrollable anger, ran after Tualvungi. But on having reached the place, he found Tualvungi already dead. He killed himself laying down besides them. Tualvungi and Zawlpala transformed themselves into a butterfly and flew ahead of him. Phuntiha was also transformed into a butterfly and flew after them so as to chase them.

Phuntiha was jealous of the other two and tried to express his jealousy by singing,

“Giddy, gaudy butterflies,  
Flitting gaily through the skies”

But the happy pair above him were well content to leave him alone.

So goes the story about the solitary butterfly following the butterfly couple we see today.

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16. Tuantuah—A flowering shrub whose flower is scarlet.

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## TECHNOLOGY OF SOME OF THE IMPORTANT TRADITIONAL CRAFTS IN ANCIENT AND MEDIAEVAL INDIA

"The study of technology is an essential key to the understanding of a people's culture." This is a very significant statement made by M. J. Herskovits in his monumental work on "Man And His Works." There is no denying the fact that in man's struggle for survival, resources and techniques are his greatest assets.

In India, the study of the technology of crafts with particular reference to the ancient and mediaeval periods has not been made in a systematic manner. Some scholars have, however, tried to deal with the topic in such a way, as if the technology of crafts does not have significant bearing on the material culture of the people. A good deal of work has been done in respect of the artistic appreciation, socio-religious significance and aesthetic appraisal of ancient and mediaeval Indian art, architecture, sculpture, painting etc., but so far as the technology of crafts is concerned, only a few casual references from ancient texts or some results of stray investigations on the technology of excavated or explored artifacts have been recorded without any fruitful analysis. As a result, we have so long been deprived of obtaining a true picture of the technology of a certain craft with special reference to its evolution, development or ups and downs in different epochs of Indian History. But if we carefully examine the materials at our disposal, there is some possibility of tracing out the sequences of the technology of at least some of the important crafts flourishing in ancient and mediaeval India.

A good number of crafts are supposed to have existed during the periods under survey. As for example, mention may here be made of the manufacture of pottery, terracotta, textiles, ivory, stone or metal images, gold silver or semi-precious stone ornaments, shell and bone objects, and other miscellaneous craft specimens including a few metal wares, which appear to have played an important role in the socio-economic life of the people of ancient and mediaeval India. Of these craft categories, examples of potter's work, ivory and metal image-casting by *cire-perdue* method at least provide us with some sort of systematic data about their technical aspects. As regards other crafts

we may have some literary and archaeological sources dealing with their mode of manufacture, but the source materials are so fragmentary that one cannot make an attempt to establish a chronological sequence of the technology of those crafts. The criterion for the selection of potter's craft, ivory works and metal-image casting by *cire-perdue* process is mainly based on the probable availability of some authentic testimony to the origin, gradual development or innovations in the technological fields of these crafts. In a word, these crafts atleast represent traditional characteristics in their line and form, style and execution, and one can expect a continuity in their age-old traditions in techniques only with timed variations.

Before we deal with the technical aspects of the aforesaid selected crafts, it will not be out of place to say a few words regarding the definition of craft. According to dictionary meaning, the word 'craft' generally means 'skill,' 'manual art,' 'skilled trade' etc. But the connotation of the word, in the view of a connoisseur of Indian art is somewhat different from the meaning given in the english dictionaries. In India, the word 'craft' is always found to be associated with the word 'art.' A craft example is, therefore, supposed to bear some artistic elements in its line and form, style and execution. It is more of an individualistic type than of a mechanical character. If we carefully examine a craft specimen, it will certainly prove that a craftsman has an individual fantasy. He produces an object which, in its highest aesthetic form comes from the intimate and organic connection between hand, eye and brain, and the rhythmic movement of the soul.

Some scholars try to include craft under the category of small-scale, cottage or household industries, which truly speaking signify some sort of mechanical enterprise in which artistic taste or aesthetic urge does not appear to be a predominant factor as we notice in the craft categories. In the former, collective efforts play an important role, whereas in the latter, individual and traditional characteristics in distinctive styles and expression remain surprisingly naive, spontaneous and vital. On this ground, a craft example is always considered to be an art specimen ; while a product of cottage, household or small-scale industries is simply regarded as a utilitarian object produced on large-scale basis mainly under the impulse of manual labour or mechanical skill. Even if we examine the ancient and mediaeval artifacts, the distinction between craft specimens and industrial products becomes inevitable.

### **Technology of potter's craft :**

Of the three crafts selected for the study of technology, potter's

craft appears to be the most vital one. In India, ancient technology had its root in the evolution of potter's art of clay modelling. The potter's craft, as it appears, can be classified into main categories such as pottery-making and manufacture of terracotta objects. The evolution of the technique of pottery-making in India probably took place in prehistoric times. In the beginning, hand-modelled pottery was introduced by the potters. As for example, the earliest occurrence of this type of pottery in association with microliths was in the late levels of Langhnaj in North Gujarat, Nagarjunakonda in Andhra Pradesh, and Birbhanpur in West Bengal. There were no kilns specially built for firing pots in prehistoric times. Pots were placed in circular pits and a small fire was built around after partially covering the pots with sherds. The potter's wheel was also unknown.<sup>2</sup>

The potter's wheel was invented at a late stage, most probably in the neolithic age when with change from a food gathering to food producing economy, the demands for storage increased. But it is very interesting to note in this context that side by side with the wheel-made pottery, the hand-made pottery was still the order of the day. This pottery was coarse-grey in appearance. Sometimes the surface was treated by a thin slip of the same clay and burnished before firing. Rounded bases were first moulded, and then the complete shape of the pot was made by placing it on the convex surface of an inverted bowl. The saucer was turned by one hand and then shaping of pot was done by the other. This sort of mechanism is still being practised by the potters in some parts of South India.<sup>3</sup>

The notable technological advancement in the pottery craft must have taken place during the Harappan and Post-Harappan periods. The pottery examples recovered from the Harappan and Post-Harappan sites clearly show how skillfully the potter-artists of these periods utilised the wheel, and painted naturalistic and geometric motifs in panels one below the other to break the monotony. So far as the clay is concerned, it was well-levigated and heavy. The firing was uniform and hence most of the pottery has a dull-red appearance.<sup>4</sup>

In the beginning of about first millennium B.C., a very interesting type of pottery called the 'Painted Grey Ware' appeared in the upper Northern part of India. This pottery was undoubtedly made on the wheel with the well-levigated clay and painting was executed in black colour.<sup>5</sup> In the second half of the first millennium B.C. we come across a significant type of pottery throughout the Gangetic Valley, which popularly known as N.B.P. (Northern Black Polished) ware is quite akin to the 'Painted Grey Ware' referred to above. This pottery was made of a well-levigated and fine clay, and was potted on a fast spinning



wheel. Some scholars suggest that the N.B.P. pots were dressed with haemitite by keeping them once again on the wheel in leather hard state before firing. In some cases it is found to be partly grey and partly brown, and in other case it is reddish.<sup>6</sup> From the N.B.P. ware sherds from Tripuri it seems that the vessels after potting on the wheel were 'wet-smoothed' and burnished. This resulted in making the surface of the pots smooth and impervious.<sup>7</sup>

During the latter periods viz. the Sunga, Kushan, Gupta, Post-Gupta and the mediaeval periods, decorated pottery is supposed to have played an important role in the technology of the pottery craft in India.<sup>8</sup> As the needs of the society grew, productivity increased. Professional jealousy must have infused the potters with the competitive spirit. Under such circumstances, the potters had to search for new ways and means to decorate the pots. Generally decoration was done by painting, stamping, making incision, by roulette, moulding and in applique designs. The pot could be painted both before and after firing. Decorations other than paintings were made on the pot when it was in plastic state. Rouletting might be done on the wheel by a tool known as roulette. Stamping, making incisions, moulding and applique designs were made on the pot when it was off the wheel. The potters used to prepare their own stamps bearing various motifs. These stamps were in negative and when the pot was stamped, the positive impression was left on it. Some powdered material like pounded clay, ash, mica or sand must have been sprayed to bring out clay impressions, otherwise the stamp would stick to the pot. The incisions could be made by any sharp or pointed tool. In case of moulded designs, moulds had to be prepared with the help of small stamps, and then the moulds were fired and used in one or more pieces for impressing the design on the vessels. The designs in applique were obtained by fingers. Sometimes the stamped and moulded motifs could also be applied.<sup>9</sup>

Apart from the decorated pottery, we also come across some other important types of wares viz. Megalithic Wares, Indo-Roman Wares specially including amphoras, rouletted and the Red-polished Ware during the Sunga-Kushana periods. The Megalithic ware was a fine product and was wheel-made and polished. The Black-and-Red ware, which is supposed to be a distinctive ware of Megalithic pottery types, was produced by a technique called the process of inverted firing, whereby the pots, kept inverted during firing, turned black at the places of direct contact with the fire viz. the inner surface and the exterior edge around the rim, while the rest of the exterior surface turned red. This ware was sometimes salt-glazed to present a shining though crackled appearance.<sup>10</sup> The amphoras, rouletted and arretine wares, which

clearly prove India's extensive trade contacts with the Western World, were probably produced in India in the same technique followed by the foreign potters. The rouletted ware was a fine black-slipped and burnished ware with a decorated pattern on the inner bottom, drawing by a machine-like contrivance called a roulette. The Red-polished ware had a bright red slip which was highly burnished. The clay was fine and completely fired. The technical peculiarity of this ware was that some parts were fashioned in moulds and sometimes, entire small pots were made in double mould and then joined.<sup>11</sup>

The next, but the most important item of the potter's craft is the *manufacture of terracottas*, which specially includes human and animal figures, dolls and toys, and other utilitarian and decorative objects. Our survey of Indian potter's craft shows that the art of pottery making started earlier than the art of terracotta making. The potters started practising this craft when the society was well-advanced both in cultural and economical spheres.

The origin of the terracotta craft may be traced in the terracotta tradition of the peasant cultures of Kulli and Zhob. About the first half of the third millennium B.C. these cultures are known to have flourished respectively in North and South Baluchistan. According to many scholars the Harappan culture of the Indus valley (c. second half of the third millennium B.C.) bears close affinity with these cultures, and if we carefully examine the manufacturing process, style, line and form of the terracottas found at Kulli and Zhob, it is evident that the Harappan culture had significant contacts with the Kulli and Zhob cultures, and a sequence of plastic tradition may apparently be recognised.<sup>12</sup> It cannot be denied that the Harappan culture indicates a change from the isolated peasant communities to the large and highly organised urban communities and from agricultural economy to a commercial economy, but the technique employed in the manufacture of the terracotta figurines and their dresses recalls the one noticed on the Kulli and Zhob figurines with which the figurines of the Harappa culture may be said to have been closely related.<sup>13</sup> Although primitive in appearance, the terracotta female figurines like those of the peasant cultures were done entirely by the hand by pinching up or pressing down the clay by thumb and fingers according to the needs of the form. Eyes were also made of two separate pellets and the mouth, again, of a small strip applied to the face with a deep straight indentation to indicate the lips. The breasts, and the navel, wherever shown, were also by separate pellets or by cones. The ornaments were executed in separate strips and pellets, and then fixed at their appropriate positions. In the figurines of the peasant cultures the hands were usually attached to the body, while in the Harappan

figurines they were comparatively detached and either hanged down along the sides, or were spread out, or carried something with one or both the hands. In these respects, the Harappan figurines showed notable advancement in the technology of the terracotta craft. Another interesting point to be noted in this context is that, entirely modelled by the hand in the process, the figurines were all solidly built, except in the few bigger animal figurines which were known to have been worked over an inner core of straw. The straw was consumed in the firing leaving the inside hollow. The small masks appeared to have been pressed from moulds, as the thinness of the objects would indicate. After firing, the figurines were covered with a red wash, light as well as deep.<sup>14</sup>

During the Post-Harappan period terracotta finds are not rare, but their number appears to be comparatively less than those found during the Harappan period. So far as the technique is concerned, the Post-Harappan terracottas do not show any significant change either in their line or form, or in their style or execution. During the subsequent periods stretching upto the beginning of the Mauryan period we come across a very few terracotta objects. The probable reason for the non-availability of a good number of terracotta objects during these periods is still to be investigated, but it cannot be denied that the use of terracotta objects must have been limited to some extent due to some reason or the other. In the conclusion portion of this paper some hypothesis will be made in this regard.

During the Maurya, Sunga, Kushan, Gupta, Post-Gupta and mediaeval periods terracotta objects are found to have played a significant role in the material culture of the people. In the mediaeval period the craft might be on the stage of decline, yet its wide distribution in the preceding periods clearly proves that the craft was in a very flourishing condition atleast upto the Post-Gupta period. So far as the technology of the craft during the aforsaid periods is concerned, it is to be noted that mould played an important part, though hand-modelled terracottas were also in vogue side by side. The Maurya terracottas, which have been generally found at Pataliputra, the Maurya capital, Bulandi Bagh, Buxar and some other sites of Bihar, appear to be characterised by remarkably individual traits in respect of physiognomy as well as expression. In spite of a frontal treatment each represented a complete figure in the round. But for the faces which were pressed from the moulds, the figurines were modelled by the hand. The *applique* technique was also employed for delineating ornaments and head-dresses, and usually the form was burdened with them.<sup>15</sup>

Some scholars like A. K. Coomaraswamy<sup>16</sup> and Stella Kramrisch<sup>17</sup>

classified some of the Indian terracottas as the "ageless" type which was entirely made by the hand by means of such rough and ready devices as flattening and rounding the body, pinching up and pressing down soft clay according to the requirement of the form, and drawing the ends of the limbs into conical points—all done by the simple pressure of the fingers. Eyes, lips, ears, navel, hair etc. were indicated either by mere scratches or incisions, or by strips and pellets separately fashioned and applied on the summarily modelled form. The *applique* technique was also employed for delineating ornaments and head-dresses. Apart from the 'ageless' types, the distribution of the mould-made types of terracottas was very much extensive and wide-spread throughout India particularly in the Gangetic Valley during the periods under survey. It is very interesting to point out in this connection that a few terracotta moulds were recovered from Bangarh, a prolific archaeological site in North Bengal.<sup>18</sup> Among other important sites which have yielded mould-made terracottas, mention may be made of Taxila in the Punjab, Mathura, Sravasti (Saheth-Maheth), Ahichchhtra, Kausambi (Kosam), Bhita and Rajghat in Uttar Pradesh, Padmavati (Pawaya) in Madhya Pradesh, Pataliputra (Patna), Buxar and Vaisali (Basarh) in Bihar and Tamralipti (Tamluk), Mahasthangarh and Chandraketugarh in Bengal.<sup>19</sup>

It has already been discussed that the terracottas had to be made either by hand or by mould. But a significant technique was evolved during the Post-Gupta period when the terracottas were also made by means of a combined technique which involved simultaneous operation of the wheel, the mould and the hand. Recent excavations carried out at the ancient site of Ahichchhtra (Distt. Bareilly, U.P.) have revealed a good number of hollow cylindrical terracottas which were apparently made on the wheel. As for example, mention may here be made of a headless male figure seated on a high cylindrical pedestal with legs hanging down. The pedestal was wheel-turned and a base plate was added for the feet. On a wheel-turned hollow cylindrical base as high as the knees, the hollow bust was worked up and then the mould-made head was joined to it. Usually the head ends in a tenon which was inserted into the hollow bust; this can be seen through the tabular bust from the other end.<sup>20</sup> Similar terracotta figurines of the same date have also been discovered from the site of Kasipur (Distt. Moradabad, U. P.). These figurines are now in the reserve collection (Safdarjung, New Delhi) of the Archaeological Survey of India. One of the specimens examined was a seated female figurine on a pedestal which was apparently made on the wheel. The pedestal bears distinctive wheel-marks both inside and outside. Terracotta examples made by this process were also recovered from the archaeological sites of Tamluk and Panna in the

district of Midnapore, West Bengal. These terracottas (lizard-headed Mother-and-child figurines) stylistically dated in the early mediaeval period are displayed in the terracotta gallery of the Asutosh Museum of Indian Art, Calcutta University. On a careful examination of the finds it is found that the body of this type of terracottas was generally made on the wheel, while the ornaments on the body, the hands, the creeping offsprings and the head were modelled by hand and then fixed in the *applique* technique. In the manufacturing process of these terracotta figurines wheel and hand played a significant role. Even the heads of these figurines were modelled by hand and not by mould. This shows a clear distinction between the techniques followed by the potters of Kashipur and Ahichchhatra, and the potters of Tamluk and Panna. The former used mould for the preparation of the head, while the latter applied hands for the same purpose.<sup>21</sup>

A survey of the technology of potter's craft in ancient and mediaeval India, therefore, shows that early man's technological skills and inventions were very much concerned with the modelling of clay, which has been regarded as the primeval plastic material, not only because of its ready availability, but also on account of its easy tractability.

### **Technology of the Ivory Craft :**

The data relating to the manufacturing process of the ivory craft may not be available in detail, but one can at least throw some light on certain aspects of the technology of the craft which is supposed to be one of the very ancient crafts of India. Evidences of the existence of this craft are found in the Harappan sites of Western and North-western India. A careful examination of the ivory examples recovered from Mohenjodaro shows that the ivory carvers of the Harappan period most probably used saw, chisel and lathe in their manufacturing process. Possibility of the use of other tools is there, but our knowledge about them is so limited that we cannot make a concrete suggestion on their functions in the manufacturing technique. The incised or curved designs and motifs on the ivory examples were most probably made by different types of chisels. Evidences of the use of black or red pigment or paste on these designs have also been found. The teeth of the combs recovered from Mohenjodaro appear to have been cut with a saw, while the petals on the ivory vessels show traces of light red pigment with which they were inlaid. The awls are supposed to be made from the die, while the battons and the shafts were most probably turned on the lathe.<sup>22</sup>

The evidence of ivory works belonging to the Post-Harappan

period is so insufficient that no attempt can be made to throw light on its technological aspects. From a dice recovered from the site of Chirand (Distt. Saran, Bihar) it appears that the technique of making designs by means of fine chisels was prevalent during this period.<sup>23</sup>

During the latter periods ranging between the 7th century B.C. and the 3rd century B.C. ivory carvers played an important role in the socio-economic life of the people. Making of designs and motifs by incision or by punching process became very popular among the craftsmen.<sup>24</sup> One ivory handle decorated with chequers and hachures has been recovered from Rugar, an important archaeological site in the Distt. of Ambala, Punjab. This ivory example shows a definite advancement in the technique of ivory carving.<sup>25</sup> During the period between 2nd century B.C. and 3rd century A.D., the ivory craft saw the hey day of its all rounded development. Apart from the decoration by incision, hatching or with mouldings, lathe played an important role in the manufacturing process.<sup>26</sup> Another notable event in the history of technology of ivory craft of this period is the manufacture of human figure in the round i.e. in three dimensional pose. For example, mention may be made of the *Sri-Lakshmi* figure from Ter (Distt. Osmanabad, Maharashtra) which unquestionably shows distinction in artistic and technical skill of the ivory-carvers of the period.<sup>27</sup> Among other significant examples of ivory works, the bands and decorated plaques including panels recovered from Begram (the ancient *Kapisa*, Mod. *Kafiristan*) deserve special mention in this context.<sup>28</sup> The technique of ornamentation of the bands and decorated plaques is very interesting. On certain bands the decoration was engraved with a style. Certain variants in this method may also be seen. The undecorated zones were eliminated by scooping with the result that the decorated part came out in light relief. The transition from simple engraving with a style to flat relief by scooping and hollowing the non-decorated zones was represented in a piece. On some plaques the contour was slightly scooped and on this surface, the craftsman did the relief work resulting in "relief in reverse." This technique reached its perfection in the larger plaques. The deeply incised contour yielded a shading, which admirably gave the effect of modelling. The composite motifs on the borders gave an excellent example of this technique. In certain plaques, the classical formulae of a very much accentuated relief as in wood work was followed. The craftsman was not satisfied by chamfering this undecorated surface; he eliminated it. The plaques and bands also show traces of painting in which red predominates. Black was used at times to accentuate the contours of the figures. The hair was also painted black and so also the pupils of the eyes.

During the Gupta, Post-Gupta and mediaeval periods examples of ivory figures in the round, caskets, bangles, plaques, throne-legs and inlaid works have been found at different sites of India. A careful scrutiny of some of the notable examples belonging to these periods shows that the craftsmen must have used different types of chisels, saw, styles and lathe in their manufacturing process. Painting of ivory objects with different colours specially with lac was also not uncommon.<sup>29</sup> The most significant advancement in the field of technology of these periods was the introduction of inlay work on wood in ivory.<sup>30</sup> For this work, fine ivory sheets were supposed to be cut into pieces of different sizes and then set into the appropriate portions cut on the wooden surface. The techniques involved in the manufacturing process of ivory carving in Ancient and Mediaeval India appear to be more or less typical and conservative, and their age-old characteristics are still found in the examples produced by the present-day ivory-carvers who may have introduced sophisticated elements in their artistic expression and aesthetic appraisal.

### **Technology of Metal Image-Casting by Cire-perdue Process :**

The technology of metal image-casting in India by *cire-perdue* process is supposed to be of high antiquity. Some scholars are of the opinion that the small bronze statuette of the dancing girl found at Mohenjodaro was most probably manufactured by the process of lost-wax (*cire-perdue*).<sup>31</sup> But as no mould used for casting bronze has yet been yielded from the excavations at Mohenjodaro, it is very difficult to be precise about the actual method of casting, viz. direct casting from moulds or the casting by *cire-perdue* process. The intricate patterns and designs reproduced in casting the bronze figurine would, however, indicate that most probably the 'lost-wax' process was employed, as direct casting from a mould would not produce a bronze of such a fine finish.

Excepting the above noted statuette belonging to the Harappan period no other notable examples of metal art produced by the *cire-perdue* casting process have been found in India until the Gupta period. However, at Taxila, Sir John Marshall<sup>32</sup> reports that *cire-perdue* metal-casting techniques were used at that time to produce gold and copper ornaments and other objects which were of Hellenistic styles. Moreover, two bronze images both of *Parsvanath*, belonging to the first century A.D. (now displayed in the Prince of Wales and Patna Museums respectively) as well as the image of a standing Tirthankara from Chausa, Bihar, datable to the second-third century, A.D. show that the

art of metal-casting by *cire-perdue* method may have very much flourished during the Gupta period, but the technology of the craft was also in existence during the Sunga-Kushana periods.

As already noted, the real development of the *cire-perdue* process took place during the Gupta period which is considered to be the 'Golden Age' of Indian History. Of this period, a few superb examples of *cire-perdue* hollow casting techniques are still extant, the most notable one, of course, being the famous Sultanganj Buddha. It was also during this period that the *cire-perdue* bronze casting processes were first recorded in the *Silpasastras*, the technical-cum-canonical texts used by the metal craftsmen in their production of bronze images. Mathura in the West, Sarnath (near Banaras), Magadha (now Bihar) in the central zone, and Bengal in the eastern zone, were the most important centres of this renaissance of plastic art activity. Although a number of both solid and hollow-cast bronze figures datable to the Gupta period have been recovered from different sites, the finest one is the Sultanganj Buddha which was cast in pure copper in two layers. The inner layer was moulded on an earthy, cinder-like core composed of a mixture of sand, clay, charcoal and paddy husks. The outer layer of copper seems to have been cast over the inner one, presumably by the *cire perdue* process.<sup>33</sup>

During the Post-gupta and the early mediaeval periods, copper and bronze images were also made on a large scale by *cire-perdue* hollow or solid casting technique. The most important sites, from where examples of *cire-perdue* casting processes have been recovered, are Nalanda and Kurkihar in Bihar and Sirpur in Madhya Pradesh. Bengal, during the rule of the Pala dynasty was also a very important centre of *cire-perdue* process. The work of two outstanding Bengali painters and sculptors, father and son, named Dhiman and Bitopala respectively, gave rise to a new art style in metal art. This school's widespread use of the *cire-perdue* process was to influence the manufacture of copper and bronze icons in Nepal and Tibet.

In South India the icon production by *cire-perdue* process became very popular during the Chola period (cir. 9th to 13th century A.D.). Many examples executed by the *cire-perdue* solid casting method have been recovered from the Tamil country, the most notable one, being the famous *Nataraja* in bronze. With the eclipse of the Cholas in the 13th century A.D., the excellence of the art of metal casting was affected to some extent because of the reason that the metal image art of this period ultimately merged into that of the less artistically distinguished one of the Vijayanagar period (14th-16th century A.D.).<sup>34</sup>

Apart from the archaeological finds, we have some literary sources



dealing with the lost-wax process. The literary sources may be late in date i.e. belonging to the Gupta, Post-gupta and early mediaeval periods, but the information supplied by these sources are undoubtedly invaluable. The earliest *Silpasastra* that describes the process is the *Madhu-Chehhisthavidhanam* as recorded in the 68th Chapter of the *Manasara*, believed to have been compiled in the Gupta period.<sup>35</sup> As laid down in the formula for the preparation of a wax image in this treatise, the bees wax and dammar (the resinous sap of the *sal* tree) must first be correctly mixed (with a little oil) to make the prepared wax. The proposed image must first be completely visualized and realized in the mind of the *Sthapati* through contemplation until it is finally ready to be modelled in the "prepared wax." When the wax image is completed it should be purified with the fine powdered pigments (*panchavarna*). In preparing the wax models of the *murtis*, at the jointures of the component parts of the body they should be reinforced (before being covered by the clay mould) with copper rods or nails, and although the wax model will melt away (during furnacing), there should be no objection to using those supports (since they can be chiselled off after the *murti* is cast). The wax model is then to be covered with layers of mud (moulding sand) and (when dry) must be heated and thereby the wax expelled. After casting, the mould should be sprinkled with water to cool it so that it (the cast icon) may be removed after it is broken open.

The *Uttarabhaga* of *Silparatna* belonging to the Gupta period also contains valuable information about image making by both solid and hollow casting process. The first chapter of the said treatise deals with the method of preparation of different types of clay, while the second chapter deals with the techniques of casting. As described in the treatise, an image is first modelled out of the "medium clay" which is pounded on a pounding stone to fine powder and mixed with dung. This must then be covered with the 'fine clay', which is the most plastic form of the 'medium clay'. Over this (clay model) is put a (thin) layer of wax, the detailed modelling of which is done with tools made of bamboo or tamarind wood. Over this, when finished, is put an application of the 'soft clay' which contains three parts of clay plus one part of powdered pottery, mixed together on a grinding stone. An orifice is made at the bottom of the clay mould, the latter being allowed to dry and, with a slight application of heat, the wax (inside the mould) is expelled (from the mould) through the orifice. The mould is then heated red-hot and put in position, orifice end up. Into this the molten metal is poured. If the image to be cast has to be of solid and heavy, then the wax model of it must be prepared out of a solid piece of wax.

This is covered with layers of mud (clay) the wax expelled and the cavity (thus left empty within the clay mould) filled with molten metal. This will result in a solid metal image.<sup>36</sup>

The traditions and techniques of metal casting in India are also recorded in numerous texts of the mediaeval period, i.e. from 8th to 12th centuries A.D. and even later. The Jain *Anuyogadvara Churni* mentions hollow casting and *Vishnudharmottara* both solid and hollow casting by the *cire-perdue* method.<sup>37</sup> The *Vishnu Samhita*<sup>38</sup> also gives us some information about casting of image by *cire-perdue* process. Of the latter texts, i.e. the *Samarangana-Sutradhara* and the *Yaktikal-pataru*, a mediaeval encyclopaedic work which is most important from the point of view of the techniques of the *cire-perdue* process, is the *Manasollasa* or *Abhilashitartha Chintamani* (12th century A.D.) which throws much light on the contemporary metal casting by *cire-perdue* method.<sup>39</sup> This work is considered to be the best of the few hitherto known texts on the subject as it furnishes us with every detail of the process, stage by stage, from the preparation of the model to the finishing of the metal cast. The details of the *cire-perdue* metal casting as given in the *Manasollasa* are summarised as follows: (i) the model image should be prepared according to the *Navatala* measurement, (ii) besmearing the image with refined clay, (iii) clay mixed with charred, husk, cotton and a little finely powdered salt, and ground on a smooth stone should be applied three times all over and round (the image), (iv) the first layer (of clay) should be thin and should be dried up in the shade. After a couple of day a second layer should be applied again. When dry again, there should be the third coating thickly applied, (v) (one) should besmear the whole (image or model) with clay leaving the mouths of the tubes open and the wise man should dry up (the clay coating) with care, (vi) the expert should first measure the wax of the image, which has to be made either in brass, or copper, or silver or gold. Brass and copper should be taken ten times that of wax, silver twelve times and gold sixteen, (vii) then, one should encase the metal, either gold or one that is desired, with clay and coconut-shaped crucible (thus formed) should be dried up in the aforesaid manner, (viii) next (one) should melt away the wax (from the mould) by heating (i.e. the mould) in fire and should afterwards heat the crucible in cinders, (ix) after making a hole with an iron on the top of the crucible and holding it tightly with a pair of tongs (one should bring the heated crucible (out of the cinders), (x) one should place a burning wick in the mouth of the tube of the heated (mould of the) image, (xi) after bending the crucible, held tightly by the tongs, (one) should pour molten metal into the mouth of the tube in a continuous

stream and stop when it is full to the brim of the tube, (xii) the adjacent fire should be put out for the purpose of cooling (the mould with the molten metal). When the image (i.e. the mould) gets naturally cool, the expert should break up the clay (mould) very carefully. The metal image (thus prepared) verily resembles that in wax, endowed with similar limbs and other details.<sup>40</sup>

The survey of the technology of image-making by *cire-perdue* method, therefore, shows that this craft was one of the most important crafts in ancient and mediaeval India. Moreover, recent investigations carried out by Ruth Reeves on behalf of the All India Handicrafts Board and the office of the Registrar General, India, have also revealed that the Metalsmiths of Rampur (Bankura, West Bengal), Baripada, Sorponkha, Pairakuli and Asnasol (Orissa), Jagadapur (Madhya Pradesh), Lowadih (Ranchi, Bihar) and Swamimalai (Madras) still prepare images by the age-old *cire-perdue* process in different metals such as copper, brass and bronze.

### Conclusion :

Our survey of the technical aspects of the three selected crafts viz. the potter's craft, the Ivory work and the Metal Image casting by *cire-perdue* process appears to have thrown some light on the technology of these crafts with special reference to their process of evolution, gradual development and ups and downs in different phases of ancient and mediaeval Indian History. There is no denying the fact that we do not have sufficient data which enable us to investigate in detail the earliest man's thoughts, desires, activities and achievements in the field of material culture, but on the basis of data available with us it has, however, been possible to trace out the chronological sequences of the technology of atleast some of the important crafts in ancient and mediaeval India. Our study might have been more interesting if we could get some corroborative literary data from a vast treasury of ancient Indian texts which represent the intellectual and literary activities of different periods of Indian History. The early literary sources such as the *Vedas*, the *Brahmanas*, the *Aranyakas*, the *Sutras*, the Jaina and the Buddhist literatures, the Epics viz. the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, the *Dharma-sastras* or *Smritis*, the *Puranas*, the *Kavyas* and other Sanskrit literature of the ancient and mediaeval periods undoubtedly throw sufficient light on the language and literature, Political and Legal Institutions, Religion and Philosophy, Social and Economic conditions of the contemporary periods, but about the technology of the crafts prevalent during the relevant periods we

seldom get adequate information from these literary sources. It has already been noticed that out of the three crafts selected for study, only for one craft i.e. image-making by *cir-perdue* process, we get valuable information from the literary sources datable in the later periods. For the technology of this craft in the earlier periods we have to depend mainly on the archaeological findings. As regards the technology of other crafts also we come across only fragmentary and stray references in the ancient and mediaeval texts which may throw some light on other aspects of the crafts in general, but not on the technical aspects, and thereby compelling us to depend mainly on the excavated materials.

It has already been noticed that during the period ranging from round about 1400 B.C. to 800 B.C. we come across a very few examples of significant pottery excepting a good number of "Painted Grey Wares" recovered from various archaeological sites in the Upper Gangetic Basin. Even the terracottas, which are considered to be one of the major items of potter's craft, are also rarely found during this period. On the basis of the paucity of the specimens of material culture some scholars are inclined to call this period as "Dark Age" of Indian History.<sup>41</sup> It may, therefore, be presumed that after the gradual decay of the Post-Harappan Chalcolithic Cultures there prevailed some sort of social, political and economic instability throughout the country specially in Northern India. Scholars have, however, attempted to associate this period with the migration of the Aryans and their gradual expansion in different parts of the Ganga-Yamuna Doab. The "Painted Grey Ware" which is generally associated with the early settlers of the Aryan stock has been found at Hastinapura, Ahichchatra, Kampil, Panipat, Baghpat, Tilpat, Mathura etc.<sup>42</sup> are associated with the story of the *Mahabharata*. The date of the *Mahabharata* war has been suggested by Pargiter<sup>43</sup> to be *circa* 950 B.C., which falls well within the "Painted Grey Ware" period at Hastinapura. B. B. Lal assumes that "the ware was associated with the early settlers at these sites viz the *Panravas*, *Panchalas*, etc., who formed a part of the Aryan stock in India."<sup>44</sup>

From the facts noted above, it may be suggested that the socio-economic and political atmosphere of the aforesaid period may not have been congenial to the growth and development of a particular craft or industry. The Aryan people, who were very much busy with their expansion and settlement programmes, probably could not take active interest in the promotion of arts and crafts. They most probably devoted time to produce artifacts on a large-scale only during the later period when they stabilized their position in Northern India. Before that they were mainly occupied with war with the Non-Aryans and

what they produced was only meant for defence purposes. The literary sources of the later Vedic period may, however, contain references to the practise of arts and crafts specially those of leather-workers, weavers, wheel wrights, potters and smiths, but the data available with us are so fragmentary that it is very difficult to throw any significant light on the technology of these crafts.

The cause of decline of most of the important traditional crafts (excepting image making by *cire-perdue* process) during the Post-Gupta and Early Mediaeval periods may be the same as noted in the previous paragraph, but there were some other factors also which alluded to the decline of the age-old crafts. It is known to all students of Indian History that there was a continuous struggle for empire among the ruling dynasties, and the atmosphere created thereby was not at all favourable for the growth and development of the crafts which could flourish only in the stable condition of a society. The craft of image making by *cire-perdue* was in a flourishing condition because of the reason that it might have received royal patronage from the contemporary ruling dynasties like the *Palas*, *Senas*, *Cholas*, *Chalukyas*, *Rashtrakulas* and *Pallavas* who were noted for their religious activities. During the late mediaeval periods most of the traditional crafts were in a decaying condition. The sovereign power passed into the hands of foreigners who belonged to alien races and professed a new religion of somewhat militant type. The establishment, for the first time, of two diverse systems of culture and civilization led to a definite cleavage between the rulers and the ruled such as India had never known before. As a result, changes took place in the socio-economic life of the people. The contemporary rulers, as it appears, were not very much interested in the promotion of such crafts already existing in the country. A different pattern of material culture was set up and impetus was given to such crafts and industries which could be produced in the Royal *Kurkhanas* and which could only satisfy the needs of the royal families. In a word, the rural economy suffered a set back under the overwhelming influence of the bureaucratic state of economy.

The study of the technology of some of the important crafts in Ancient and Mediaeval India is just an attempt to throw some light on the traditional crafts, which inspite of their many ups and downs have, however, been persisted through the ages. The study may be taken to be incomplete in the sense that the story relating to the process of the evolution of the technology of this crafts, which must have covered a long period of time, is mainly based on very slender evidence. A good deal yet remains to be done, and it would require the unabated efforts

of the archaeologists, who with the help of their spades can bring the task to a reasonable state of completeness.

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and horse-riders of different sizes) in this combined techniques. The principal parts of body of these terracotta figures are made on the wheel, while the head, the ornaments, decorative motifs etc. are impressed from separate moulds and then applied on the appropriate parts of the body. Some parts of the body are also modelled by hand.

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## REVIEW OF BOOKS

**THE YEAR BOOK** of *Daily Recreation and Information, Concerning Remarkable Men and Manners, Times and Seasons, Solemnities and Merry-Making, Antiquities and Novelties* by Hone, William, London: William Tegg and Company, 1832. 824 and *Novelties* by Hone, William, London: William Tegg and Company, 1832. Republished by Gale Research Company, Detroit, Michigan, 1967. Price: \$ 22.50.

The book under review has more than 1650 pages and it is arranged chronologically with each day having its own special selection of curious notes. While there is no duplication whatsoever in the popular threesomes, they are similar in that each contains fresh bits of literary and antiquarian miscellany conveniently arranged and fully indexed in both general and subject indices. There are over 100 illustrations of unique objects and scenes from the past.

A biography of William Hone, the competent and controversial bookman, is given in the new introduction by Leslie Shepard, who also compiled a bibliography of books written, edited, or published by the author. Possessing a mordant social conscience, Hone was an outspoken critic and satirist of the wrongs of his day. His acquittals in three separate trials for alleged blasphemy in his publications indicated that he had not only the public support but also the backing of his fellow publishers who called him "a persecuted but triumphant champion of the press."

By combining this great social awareness with a life-long love of books, especially old books, Hone was eminently qualified to compile his lively books. Taking on some of the characteristics of an almanac, THE YEAR BOOK contains a monthly "alimentary calendar" of available and desirable foods as well as a plant and vegetable garden directory. Antiquarian lore, poetry selections, and observations on nature and mores are all presented in a form which lends itself to a few minutes or a few hours reading.

The interest and entertainment that the volume originally offered to both the specialist and general reader has actually increased over the years. Since the book's function was similar to that later assumed by periodicals, it supplies many rare details on old and obscure customs.

The present edition will be found useful to everybody. The publishers deserve our hearty congratulations for bringing this out.

**THE KINGDOM OF THE YOUNG**, by Verrill Elwin, Oxford University Press, Calcutta, 1968. Price: Rs. 25/-

The title of the book under review is one of the names that the



Murias give to the most cherished of their institutions,—the Ghotul. The Ghotul means the village dormitory, the bothie, the bachelors hall, which is a central institution in life and culture of the Muria, a tribal group of central India. Dr. Elwin in his book 'The Muria, and their Ghotul' had described all possible details about this institution. The book under review is an abridged version from the above title. It has twelve chapter with index. The chapters are as follows :

(1) Introduction, (2) The origin of the Ghotul, (3) Two types of Ghotul, (4) Ghotul Membership and Rules, (5) An Evening in Ghotul (6) Ghotul Discipline, (7) The Muria's Attitude to Sex, (8) The Problem of Ghotul Infertility, (9) Ghotul Recreation, (10) The Ghotul and Marriage, (11) The Ghotul and Religion & (12) Moral Standards in Ghotul.

The book under review has also 41 illustrations and 2 maps showing the position of Bastar and the distribution of the tribe in Bastar of Madhya Pradesh. The material for the original work was collected between 1935 and 1942 so the account refers to the conditions of the people are of about thirty years ago. Still "No attempt is made to bring it up to date" say the Publishers. Although the Ghotul is in existence even to day, recent development of the country has brought many changes there which have been provided by many researchers. In fact, its organisational pattern and many other items and the discussion on group-marriage, group-concubinage, pre-nuptial chastity and infertility, experimental marriage etc. are interesting and thought provoking. So the usefulness of the book under review is unquestionable.

**HAJAR BACHHARER BANGLA GAN** (Bengali Songs of a thousand years) Edited by Prabhat Kumar Goswami, Saraswati Library, Calcutta, 1376 B.S., Demy size, 388 pages. Price Rs. 15/-

The book under review is a critical edition of more than three hundred and fifty songs composed by the distinguished Bengali composers for a period of about a thousand years. The songs are classified in ten types such as devotional songs, indigenous songs, love songs, religious and ritual songs, workmen songs, nature songs, etc. with a critical introduction and notes. The introduction is well-written and it is sure to occupy a position in the musicological literature of Bengal for it draws upon many interesting points on different types of Bengali songs. For the convenience of researchers there is an index of first line of the songs. The editor and the publishers deserve our congratulation for bringing out this critical and useful book.

## EDITORIAL

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Rural crafts constitute the best source for supplementing the family income and absorbing surplus manpower. As they are labour intensive, the capital and equipment is not large, and all members of a family can participate in the production process. The contingency of death or disability of the sole bread-winner, displacing the entire family, will not occur if all members of the family are trained and engaged in production. It is essential that the implications of the slogans "every home a cottage industry" be fully understood. Cottage industries should be development-oriented. The economic objective of producing a saleable article, the social objective of providing employment and the wider objective of creating self-reliance and building up a strong community spirit should all be simultaneously achieved, through the popularisation of rural arts and crafts or handicrafts.

In the Gandhian concept, economic self sufficiency includes economic integration and unity which becomes a major instrument of nation-building. Gandhiji envisaged each village and groups of village or regions developing their own resources not only for their residents but also for the country as a whole. The net work of community development blocks has created some initial enthusiasm among the rural folk and helped in the absorption of rural manpower in developmental activity. They would have been more successful if only they had created to the principal objective of relieving unemployment and generated and mobilised all the people's energies towards this purposeful goal. Having initiated a countrywide programme of development, we should have intensified the process of integrated development and not slackened our effort. It is not too late even now.

There is no denying the fact that, merely from the point of view of rapid economic growth, the returns are going to be more than commensurate with the large investment involved. If advanced scientific technology can offer automation, cutting down human drudgery and meeting the demand of workers for a four-day week, surely the same scientific ingenuity can offer jobs to our millions, especially when we have at our command, enormous natural resources and a work season throughout the year which advantages denied to many advanced nations.

It is regrettable that the past Plans have consistently neglected to make good use of labour resources. Successful utilisation of manpower resources should be made the key-note of future planning. Development activities in a block should be planned primarily with the object of full utilisation of available skills through a programme of productive employment. The plan should map out how much of the available manpower can be absorbed in the various programmes.

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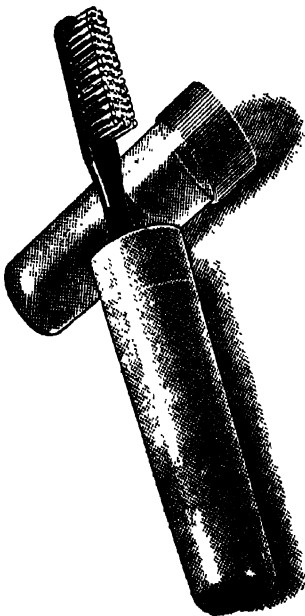
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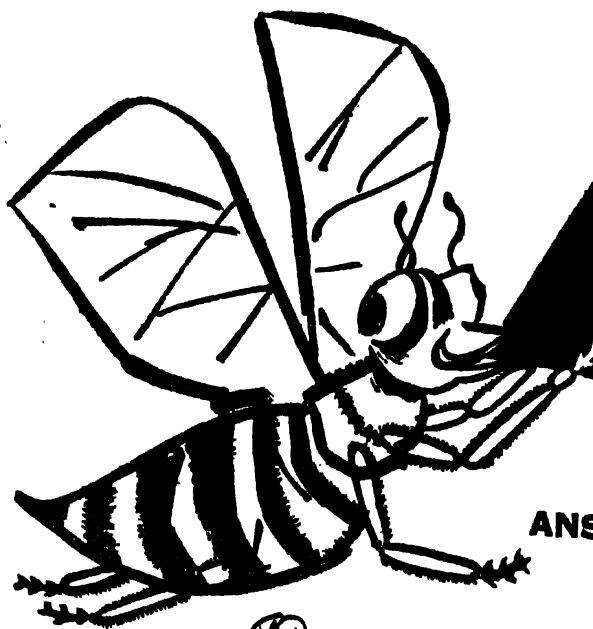
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# FOLKLORE

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SEM TOPNO

## ROMANTIC LIFE OF THE EPIC HERO KRISHNA AS DEPICTED IN THE FOLK SONG OF MUNDAS

It is a matter of amazement as to how the Epic heroes became popular among the folk. The fact is that the folk came in to contact irregularly with different races having diverse cultures. The impact of these cultures are seen in every aspect of life. Even the folk song is not immune. Many religious groups, such as Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and Christianity have come into contact with them, but the former two have left no relic among the people. Kabirpanthi and Vaishnav Sects of Hinduism have got little success. Some preachers of Vaishnav Sect visited Chotanagpur occasionally and preached their religious doctrines among the tribal people. They learnt the tribal languages and composed folk songs with the theme of their religious doctrines. They introduced Hindu gods and goddess through these songs for the purpose of planting Hindu religion among them. So, this kind of songs are nothing but foreigners' clad in native dresses. The names of these Vaishnav preachers are found in folk songs. The most popular of them are Binandas, Kishun Ray, Budu Babu, Sukhdeolal and Budan Singh.

Whether the Mundas, Hos, Santals and other Proto-Australoid tribes have prior contact with the Epic heroes, Rama, Krishna and others before settling in Chotanagpur, we cannot say definitely. But the reality is that the composers of these folk songs have so vividly portrayed the Life of Epic heroes that they seem to be tribal in character and behaviour. Their lives are as simple as the folks themselves. Thus, these preachers have partly succeeded in planting the seed of love for Epic heroes among the tribals. In this present paper the author's purpose is to reveal the romantic life of Krishna as depicted in Mundari folk song. These songs have been selected from W. G. Archer's book, "Munda Durang" from the section of Karam songs.

Krishna is a grown up youth. He has an attractive personality. He takes much delight in playing on flute. He can produce such a melodious

sound that every one has to stand to hear it. Gopinis love him deeply. They are anxious to see him. The poet has rightly expressed in the following songs :—

By the stream, under the Sanko tree, listen to him.  
He is playing on flute day and night, let us go to see him,  
Let us go all girls in pairs,  
He is playing on flute day and night,  
let us go to see him. (1004)

Below is another song similar to this :—

O' girl, you are going to fetch water from river Jamuna,  
O' virgin girl, how melodious your too rings are ringing.  
He is singing 'tiri-riri' with his flute,  
And laughing like the flooded river's sound,  
O' virgin girl, you were intoxicated to  
hear the song. (1003)

Krishna is a romantic hero. He is loved by all girls of Braj, married and unmarried alike. The sound of flute acts as hallucination to Gopinis. When they hear the sound of flute, they become restless and stealthily keep out to meet him by the bank of river Jamuna in Brindaban. By the following songs we can know how restless Gopinis are for him :—

O' 'Sahiya', give up food and drink, let us meet him.  
He is playing on flute taking name of Radha.  
In the forest, under the shade of black  
berry tree, let us talk together.  
He is taking thy name from his flute. (940)

Gopinis are so mad in love that they cannot understand the simple fact too. When they hear the sound of flute, they consider it to be their names, and all the girls come out to meet him. Following is the song in illustration of this fact :—

From where the sound of flute is coming ?  
Hearing the sound of Radha, Radha, fresh  
smiling young girls are coming out.  
Upon the branched Kadam tree of stream way-side,  
he is sitting.

---

Numbers by the end of each stanza are serial numbers in the book "Munda Purang".

He is playing on flute sitting there,  
I have dropped engraved comb on the stream's  
sand under Kadam tree.  
Caring for nothing, hearing the sound, fresh  
smiling young girls are coming out. (976)

Married girls are not obeying their husbands and unmarried their parents. Girl who is in strict control, deceives his parent saying that she has lost her comb and is going to get it or she is going to meet her Sahiya etc.

Krishna is loved by every one. When he sees any girl or group of girls, he makes sound or approaches to her or them. He is very often found in the spot where girls generally visit daily. Following is a song of such an event :—

From where he came and sat by the stream ?  
Radha, Radha, is the sound of flute. I am  
ashamed of hearing it.  
Hearing the sound all the Sakhis stood motionless.  
O' don't play on so,  
Tell someone to ask him, why he is playing so,  
I am ashamed of hearing it. (963)

A girl by chance met Krishna by the stream. She fell in love with him in first sight. Now she is so anxious to meet him again that she decides, whatever trouble may be fall on me, I shall still love him. Following is the song of this theme :—

I went to fetch water from river Jamuna,  
I was shot at heart with the arrows of five flowers  
of Modan,  
It has become difficult to me to return home as I  
have been struck by the bossom. (1039)

Following is a song in which a girl has expressed that love is like a current of the river. She will love Krishna even if she will have to give up her caste and clan. The poet has cleverly put the two characters. Radha and Krishna, among tribals to be loved by them.

O' Lolita, I am burning with the arrows,  
I am burning without fire,  
I am being taken away by the current of love.  
For him, I shall give up my caste and clan,  
O' Radha and Krishna I am in the 'current  
of your love. (1089)

Gopinis are so much in love that they meet him even in dream :—

Parent's love is great but  
greater is the love for Krishna,  
I dreamt last night,  
You look like bright light, stood before me shining,  
O' the flute holder, my heart is burning to see you,  
You have blue dresses which look like burning,  
O' the flute holder, my heart is melting for you. (943)

Gopinis of Braj are taking their bath in the river Jamuna keeping their dresses by the bank. Merrily they are playing in water altogether forgetting the presence of Krishna. He takes away all their clothes and put it on a branch of Kadam tree from where he watches them. He plays on his flute and the attention of the girls is drawn towards him. They are very much ashamed of as they were all nude. The poet has put this fact in the following song :—

O' Bhagwan, you are upon the Kadam tree,  
Tiri riri is the sound of your flute,  
O' Bhagwan, let us have our dresses quickly,  
We have to go to collect flowers to make garlands,  
We shall be chided by in-laws and all others in Braj,  
Kishun Ray<sup>1</sup> is singing this memorable song. (1223)

It is said that Krishna and Gopinis of Braj used to dance in the great Brindaban. Here is a song in which the mass dance is the main theme. The poet wants to visit the place where they were dancing :—

I shall go to Brindaban to participate in mass dance,  
All have gone, I am alone behind,  
Six hundred Gopinis are dancing.  
I shall go to Brindaban and play on 'Durang' and 'Kartal',  
Amidst six hundred Gopinis who are dancing. (1062)

Below is one more song of this theme :—

In the mass dance everyone is exhibiting  
her own style of dance.  
O' look them friend, all are dancing in pairs to and fro,  
The sound is being heard 'garam' and 'girim'.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Kishun Ray is the vaishnav preacher who is the composer of this song.

<sup>2</sup> Sound of drums.

Vermilion on head and jinjri on leg look beautiful  
Badu Babu says it is a nice dance. (1170)

There is the other aspect of pleasures and merriment too. Krishna goes to Mathura leaving Gopinis in Braj. This casual leave of him has cast gopinis in the sea of sorrow. The usual dance and merriment have suddenly been stopped. There is no laugh in Braj. The environment is quite silent but fire is burning within ashes. Every gopini is moaning. Following is the song on the unexpressed anxiety of gopinis :—

O' sister, your heart is burning for the shade  
O' sister, no one visits the shade,  
All people see the burning hill,  
But who is seeing my burning heart ? (973)

How deep is the sorrow of gopinis. They are yearning for Krishna. Their heart is burning. They are unable to suppress their love for him. In the following song, a gopini suggests to others that all should go there where he has gone :—

To where has gone the garland of Braj,  
Took away all the art of merriment,  
O' 'Sahiya', let us visit him,  
If we shall not go to-day,  
I shall die,  
Fire is burning in my heart.  
O' Sahiya let us visit him. (950)

The gopinis are weeping day and night for Krishna. They are cursing their own fate sometimes for their inability to stop him from going or speak ill to an unknown person whose acts must have caused their separation. Now they don't know what to do.

Where he went, friend, I did not notice him  
I am shedding tears day, and night, where he went ?  
I wanted to meet him, where he went ?  
Some jealous person has done wrong to me, let  
tiger may eat him.  
We were of one body and heart.  
Who has done wrong to me, leaving my world dark ?  
O' my life, my heart is burning for you  
My eye sight has gone away in long waiting  
And my world has become dark. (982)

So, every girl is sad. Most of them have lost faith in life and want to die any way.

From where the wind blow, it brought news ?  
Inside the bosom of my heart is trembling.  
Where my heart lies ?  
O' Bidhi,<sup>1</sup> what have you done to me ?  
You have given me much trouble in my youthful age ?  
There are sands and deeps in stream,  
I shall drown myself in it. (983)

At this hour of grief, there is none to give them words of consolation. A person in trouble generally prays to God and tells him his trouble so, do, these gopinis pray to Krishna. Following is the song of this theme :—

For you my tears are rolling down,  
O' friend, don't you remember us ?  
I have not taken food all the day, my heart is burning  
day and night.  
O' beloved Prabhu,<sup>2</sup> don't you remember us ?  
I have a sorrowful heart, flies here and there like vulture.  
O' friend, how deep is my sorrow at this age ?  
Hence from it will continue my life long,  
Badu babu says, how long will you remember (924)

Grief has overflowed in Braj. No girl is in happy mood. All gopinis are restless. They are waiting for the return of Krishna with heavy hearts. Some are so much upset that they go to diviners to know about Krishna. This has been expressed by the poet in the following song :—

Badu Babu<sup>3</sup> went there, where he is ?  
Sukhdeolal<sup>3</sup> is searching in panjee.  
In the forest, Budan Singh<sup>3</sup> has made a hut for him,  
Budu babu is there,  
Our Gopal is there,  
He is learning songs from Budan Singh. (977)

---

1 Fortune giver.

2 Lord.

3 Badu Babu, Sukhdeolal and Budan Singh all are vaishnav preachers. They are also the composers of songs.

So, is the consolation. Below is another song :—

Where our humourist went ?  
He is no where seen,  
He is composing songs with Budu babu,  
So, he is not coming,  
How long will they compose songs ? (975)

The extreme lamentation has been expressed in the following song :—

Brindaban and neighbouring country is burning,  
Hills and valleys are burning all people are seeing,  
Streams, revulets and sands are burning with water,  
The earth is burning. all people are burning. (1148)

Thus, the whole country of Braj is burning. Krishna too, remembers gopinis. He knows that gopinis must be in grief, so, he sends his friend Udho to Braj. As soon as he arrives at Braj, gopinis surrounded him and put many questions to him. It has been expressed by the poet in the following way :—

I have come from Mathura to Gokul,  
O' friend, does he remember us ?  
Budu bahu says, friendship and love cannot break,  
O' friend. I shall not desert you. (1160)

In these songs the gaily life of Krishna has been depicted nicely in Mundari language. The expression ably reveal the gentle feelings of gopinis. The delicate love and unberable pang of separation are indescribable by words but the folk poets (i.e. vaisnav poets) have applied proper words to express them without affecting the feelings. There is no concealment in the expression of love among the tribal youths as have been revealed in these songs. Like the birds of the air, they are heard singing songs in hills, forests, dales, by the river banks and in fields. So, the 'Vaisnav' preachers have secured proper place among the tribals through these songs.

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## FOLK-DEITIES OF TELANGANA

In the ritual organization of the village communities of the Telangana region of Andhra Pradesh, the folk-deities occupy as much a place of importance as the deities of great tradition of Hinduism. As distinguished from the All-India deities derived from the written Sanskrit literature of the Hindus, the folk-deities are essentially non-literate deities of local or regional spread, embodied in oral tradition. The cults and worships of these two categories of deities are so inextricably intertwined that the villagers do not commonly consider them to be mutually exclusive. The object of this paper is to describe, in a very brief manner, the important folk-deities of Telangana and to indicate their significance in the life and living of the rural population.

The cults and worships of the folk-deities as they prevail in this part of rural India are characterized by certain note-worthy features. These are :

- (1) The rituals and ceremonies connected with the folk-deities do not require a Brahmin priest but are conducted by either a Kummarr (potter) or a Muttracha Talari (a traditional village functionary belonging to an agricultural caste). It all depends upon the village concerned as to who enjoys to hereditary right to officiate as priest.
- (2) Not all folk-deities are represented by carved images or idols. Nor are all of them appositely installed in properly erected structures (shrines).
- (3) The folk-deities (which are animistic in character) are invariably appeased with offerings of flesh, blood and liquor.
- (4) Even the Brahmins and Vaishyas who are vegetarians by tradition, reverse the folk-deities and occasionally propitiate them with sacrifices of goats and sheep which are slaughtered and partaken of by their non-vegetarian servants or menials on their behalf.
- (5) It is generally believed that the folk-deities presiding over different phenomena of life and nature inflict misery and suffering on human beings when displeased by neglect of worship or unfulfilled vows.
- (6) Finally, the folk-deities are supposed to express their wishes and demands through the medium of a shaman or some other

man or woman who, as a rule, goes into trance and speaks out the words of the deity concerned in the first person.

A host of deities which are believed to dominate different aspects of man's existence are worshipped by the people of Telangana. The principal among these are as follows :

1. Pota Lingamiah, the protector of the village territory or the village guardian deity. No shrine is constructed for this deity who is represented by a large slab of stone set up in a central place in the village. He is the premier folk-deity and his propitiation precedes that of all others. In the month of Ashadha (June-July), when the villagers collectively propitiate most of the folk-deities, Pota Lingamiah is worshipped with offerings of cooked rice, curds and jaggery. Again, whenever an epidemic breaks out in the village and the deity presiding over the epidemic concerned is jointly propitiated by the villagers, Pota Lingamiah is invariably worshipped.

A peculiarity about the cult of Pota Lingamiah is that except the Potrajas no one else sacrifices animals before the deity. The Potraja is a religious functionary dedicated in the name of an animistic god or goddess and is an integral part of the cults and worships of the folk-deities. On the occasion of the collective worship of a folk-deity by the villagers, the Potraja, his body besmeared with turmeric and waving a thick rope whip, goes into trance and tears the throat of a goat or sheep with his teeth and dances ecstatically in honour of the deity. The Potrajas who are drawn from different Shudra and untouchable castes, regard Pota Lingamiah as their tutelary deity.

2. Uradamma, the goddess presiding over the fortunes and well-being of the villagers, is represented by an idol or piece of stone bedaubed with vermilion and turmeric (surrounded by heaps of stones on three sides) usually set up at some prominent point in the village. Propitiation of this deity is done collectively by the villagers. Along with the offerings of cooked rice, curd and jaggery, goats, sheep and fowls are sacrificed in honour of this deity. Once in three years, a he-buffalo is ritually slaughtered in the name of Uradamma, with a view to ensuring the over-all welfare of the community.

3. Maisamma, the goddess protecting the village tank, village fortification and agricultural prosperity of the village. This deity, in a shrine, is represented by an idol made of wood or stone which is dressed in white or yellow sari-like garment and smeared with vermilion and turmeric. The deity is revered by all villagers and worshipped especially on Sundays and Thursdays. In the month of Ashadha, Maisamma is propitiated on a large scale with offerings of goats, sheep, fowls and sometimes buffaloes. In the years when there are bumper harvests, the agriculturists slaughter goats, sheep and fowls in honour of Maisamma as a token of gratitude.

4. Pochamma, the goddess of smallpox is represented by a wooden or stone idol installed in a shrine. The idol is dressed in yellow or white sari-like garment with spots of turmeric and vermilion applied all over the body. These spots symbolize the pock marks, as the deity is believed to preside over smallpox. Pochamma is one of the most acutely feared and honoured folk-deities of Telangana. She is worshipped by all villagers irrespective of their caste, individually and collectively. If a person has an attack of smallpox, his or her family worships Pochamma everyday by pouring libations of water or palm juice. On recovery, a goat, sheep or fowl is sacrificed in her honour and jaggery is offered to the donkey which is regarded as her vehicle. When smallpox breaks out in an epidemic form, the entire village appeases the deity with sacrifices of goats, sheep, fowls and buffaloes. Regular propitiation of the deity is done annually with elaborate rituals and offerings of cooked rice, curd, jaggery, fried gram and a special sweet dish along with those of flesh, blood and liquor

5. Mutyalamma, the deity presiding over chickenpox is lodged in a properly erected shrine in the form of an idol made of wood or stone. She is annually worshipped by the villagers along with Pochamma, in the same manner and with the same offerings. In addition to the annual worship, propitiation of Mutyalamma is done on a large scale with sacrifices of goats, sheep, fowls and buffaloes when chickenpox spreads rapidly and attacks many people. In case of attack of chickenpox, the family of the patient concerned, daily offers libations of water or palm juice at the shrine of the deity and sacrifices a goat or sheep or fowl on recovery.

6. Mahankalamma, the deity presiding over cholera is very much similar to Pochamma and Mutyalamma both in respect of iconography and procedures of propitiation. Besides the routine annual propitiation, this goddess is appeased on a grand scale when cholera breaks out in an epidemic form by slaughtering goats, sheep, fowls and buffaloes in her name.

7. Ellamma, the goddess worshipped for the cure of boils and soreness of eyes is represented by an idol (of stone or metal) or a piece of stone installed in a shrine. The shrine of this deity is usually under a tree and by the side of an ant-hills. She is worshipped especially on Sundays, Tuesdays and Fridays and offerings of cooked rice, curd, vegetable curry and sweets are made to her. She is also propitiated with sacrifices of goats, sheep and fowls and libations of palm juice.

8. Durgamma, the goddess protecting children is represented by a stone idol bedaubed with turmeric and vermilion and lodged in a shrine. Durgamma is generally honoured on Sundays and Fridays. In the month of Ashadha, she is collectively propitiated by the villagers. Apart from

the standard vegetarian dishes which are offered to other folk-deities, sacrifices of sheep, goats and fowls are offered to Durgamma, invoking her blessings for the children of the village.

9. Balamma, the goddess whose wrath is supposed to cause illness among children and sterility among women is not represented by any idol or piece of stone. In fact, nothing is found outwardly in any village to symbolize or indicate the existence of this deity. The remarkable fact about Balamma is that unlike the other folk deities, no collective propitiation of her is done by the villagers. The villagers appease her with offerings of vegetarian dishes and sacrifices of goats, sheep and fowls within the house. A lump of earth, conical in shape and debauched with vermilion and turmeric, or a doll wrapped in white cloth and besmeared with turmeric is installed in a niche in the innermost portion of the house and honoured in the name of the deity.

10. Pinamma, the goddess who wards off evils and safeguards prosperity has no carved images or shrine. Like Balamma, Pinamma is worshipped within the house and no propitiation is done by the villagers collectively. As a rule, a she-goat or she-sheep which is pregnant is slaughtered in honour of the deity. There is no fixed day for the propitiation of Pinamma. The villagers generally honour her in times of misery and suffering, on the eve of a marriage in the family and when the death of an adult occurs in the family.

The above mentioned folk-deities constitute only a small section of the numerous lesser gods and goddesses of limited regional and local distributions which the rural people worship in different contexts and in different phases of the annual cycle of agricultural activities. It is worth nothing in this connection that the folk-deities are worshipped by the villagers under three categories: (1) as village deities - worshipped collectively by all castes or by individual households at the shrine or abode of the deity in the village or within the house, (2) as caste deities

honoured by the members of a caste jointly or by individual households at the shrine or abode of the deity in their caste ward or within the house, and (3) as household deities - worshipped within the house because the deities concerned are strictly household deities whose shrines are kept within the house.

In this context it is necessary to point out that while some deities are specific to a caste, some others are worshipped both as village deities and caste deities. Further, it should be understood that not all the folk-deities worshipped in Telangana are unique or indigenous to the region. Some of the folk-deities (for example, Pochamma, the goddess of small-pox, are of wider spread and may be identified in different linguistic-cultural regions under different designations.

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MALTI AGNIHOTRI

## ZAWLPALA AND TUALVUNGI

ONCE upon a time, a handsome youngman named Zawlpala was married to a charming girl named 'Tualvungi.' They loved each other very much. After a few days of their marriage, the king of the plain named Phuntiha,<sup>1</sup> living in the vicinity, in the course of his itinerary happened to see the couple, while Zawlpala was searching for lice on his beautiful wife's head seated on the platform in front of their house. The king was charmed by the beauty of Tualvungi<sup>2</sup> so much so that he enquired of Zawlpala about his relationship with her, asking "Oh, is she your wife or sister?" Zawlpala, boasting the beauty of his wife replied, "She is my sister." Phuntina became so infatuated with the charm of the woman that he came out with an abrupt proposal : "If so, I will marry her, and how much I will be required to pay as the bride price."<sup>3</sup> Zawlpala replied in terms what he thought it be above the means of the man, "Gayal<sup>4</sup> so numerous as to tie up in all the posts of my house ; necklaces having so much weight that can break off the Thuamban,<sup>5</sup> Daos<sup>6</sup> numerous enough so as to tuck in every bamboo piece fastened in the bamboo wall ; and clothes numerous enough to break off my Tlangba.<sup>7</sup> He thought that such things meant for her price would be above the means of the man who enquired of the price. But in spite of that, Phuntiha prevailed upon the price quoted and said "All right, I will marry her." Had Zawlpala said at that time, that it was a mere joke and that she was his wife, things would have been different ; but he did not say so. Thereupon Phuntiha returned home

1. Phuntiha :—the name of the large male swallow-tail butterfly. The female is known as Tualvungi.

2. Tual-Vungi :—the name of a large female butterfly, the male of which is called Phuntiha. The Mizos believe that butterflies are reincarnations of human beings and that Phuntiha and Tualvungi were husband and wife when they were in the flesh.

3. Among Mizos, there is a custom as to when a man want to get married, he must first of all settle the bride price.

4. Gayal :—a domestic animal.

5. Thuamban :—a post for hanging necklaces bracelets and ornaments.

6. Dao :—a large knife with wooden handle used for cutting wood etc.

7. Tlangba :—a rail for hanging things upon.

and prepared himself for the impending marriage with the materials needed for the price. And, after a few days with a large number of his subjects, he came to marry Tualvungi. Tualvungi, having seen such a big party approaching towards their village at a far-off distance, plunged in anguish and said :

“Carrying in hands such number of clothes,  
Say, she is pregnant,  
My lover, Zawlpala.”

No sooner than Zawlpala thought of any other means, the party arrived and began to busy themselves in paying off the price for Tualvungi by tying up the gayals in all posts and subposts, the daos were tucked in all the notched bamboo pieces of the wall, clothes were hung on the Tlangba which ultimately broke off and same also happened with necklaces which broke Thuamban. Zawlpala recalled what he had done and repented but he could not do anything. On the contrary he had to part with his wife whom he so dearly loved. And thus Tualvungi was taken off by the King's party. He was mournfully looking at the receding party and said, “What a mistake I have committed,” and, since then he felt very lonely. Tualvungi, now very much bewildered and saddened, was compelled to go ahead with a deep feeling of solitude and loneliness.

Before many years had gone by, Zawlpala unable to bear his loneliness any longer, visited the village where Tualvungi was putting up and lodged himself in her new house. Tualvungi gave a piece of advice to the effect that he should be very careful in taking and eating anything that Phuntiha might serve to him, least it should be injurious for him. But as ill-luck would have it, Zawlpala ate the things that Phuntiha offered to him such as Bahem and Zu<sup>8</sup> while Tualvungi was absent and busy in collecting the fuel. Bahem and Zu were the things ommitted by Tualvungi among the things she advised Zawlpala not to take. When Tualvungi returned home, she asked Zawlpala, “What things did you eat to-day?” “Bahem and Zu,” replied Zawlpala. Tualvungi regretted and said, “Why did you eat? The sooner you go back home, the better it would be for you. Now, go home immediately.” Zawlpala, then hurried home. As soon as he reached home had severe stomach pain and succumbed to it in a minute later and he was buried. Gayal's horns were hung over his grave as a mark of respect to the departed soul.

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8. Zu—Beer or any fermented liquor.

Later on the villagers ventured to call Tualvungi. But who would call Tualvungi? They tried to find the most suitable creature for the job. Thereupon the Crab came and they asked "Carb, will you be able to call Tualvungi?" In reply she said "Yes." And they asked her, 'How will you do?' and she said 'I will do Ai Ai.' "Oh, you don't know at all." So saying, they trampled it under their feet and the manner of its walking became sideways ever since. Thereafter the crow came to them. They asked, "Crow, will you be able to call Tualvungi?" and he said 'Yes.' If so, what will you do?" asked they, and he said "I will do Ak Ak" "Ah, you don't know what to do" and poured over her boiled indigo leaves' water and she became and since then she became black.

Later on came a bird called Bulbul and again they asked "Berha,<sup>9</sup> will you be able to call Tualvungi?" and she replied "Why not?" "If so how will you do?" She said "I will do Berek Berek Kuai Kin Lut." "you don't know at all" so saying they pierced its belly through the pointed piece of baniboo fencing and she died instantaneously and as a result its cressum<sup>10</sup> became red ever since. At last a wood pegeon came and they asked "Hui<sup>11</sup>, will you be able to call Tualvungi?" And it replied "Of course Yes." "And how will you do?" said they. She replied "I will do. . . . Hui hui e ka te te hui hui e." Now Zawlpala is dead; "Go Tualvungi, to pay him the last homage." The wood peigeon was chattering in the most impressive and expressive voice. Oh, you are quite well up in calling Tualvungi" and they fed her with food and meat with full satisfaction.

Thereupon the pegeon flew up in the air to call Tualvungi and sat on the tree standing near Tualvungi's house. Tualvungi was weaving a loin cloth in the verandah of their house and heard the bird setting the tune enticing her.

"Hui hui e, ka te te hui hui e,

Now Zawlpala is dead, Go, Tualvungi, to pay him the last homage"

Thereupon, Tualvungi implored the pegeon to set the tune again to check up if she was the person meant by the bird "If you actually called me, come and sit down on the Tlangba and repeat your words again." The pigeon then sat on the Tlangba and set the tune in an enticing manner. Tualvungi again implored her "If you actually call me, come and settle on the bar of my loom and set the tune." The

9. Berha—Bulbul

10 Cressum—the feather under the tail of the bird.

11. Hui—Wood pigeon.

pigeon then sat on the bar of the loom of Tualvungi and set the same tune, most enchantingly and pathetically. "You are a iresome stranger coming to call on me" so saying she gave a good meal to the pigeon with food and meat. Then Tualvungi resolved to go to Zawlpala's village at once and prepared the necessities for the impending journey. But Phuntiha would not allow her to go. The following day, Phuntina was going out on some work ; somehow he had an unnecessary apprehension that Tualvungi would go away in his absence ; so, he had a dao placed intentionally at the door with the blade upwards so as to cause Tualvungi to trample over it. Tualvungi arranged to go while Phuntiha was out and had her foot cut with the dao. She took out her new clothes from the thul,<sup>12</sup> tore up some cloth and bandaged her wounded part, soon after she left taking with her. Zawlpuan,<sup>13</sup> some Kawi<sup>14</sup> and other important items.

After some time, she reached a certain village and there she saw children playing a favourite game with Kawi. She asked the playing children.

"You who stick o'en cattle wave  
Have you seen my husband's grave"

Children replied in group.

"On your loved one's resting place,  
A flower red profusely grows  
Hunging tropics stand in rows "

She threw some Kawis before them over whose possession they quarellled. After having gone a far off distance, she saw children looking at the bull-gayal and questioned those children.

"Yonder children gazing at the bull-gayal<sup>15</sup>  
Dont thou scest my Zawlpala's grave"

12. Thul--the name of a large basket with a close fitting conical lid or cover. This basket is used as receptacle for yarn, new clothes, and other precious possessions.

13. Zawlpuan--the name given to a cloth generally blue which a bride brings to her husband upon marriage. Sometime she brings the blue yarn instead, and weaves the cloth for him after marriage. Should the husband divorce his wife, this cloth has to be returned to her.

14. Kawi--the large bean--like seed of the Entanda scanders or Eutade pursoetha--a thick woody creeper known to the Mizos as Kawi hrui. The Kawi bean is used by boys and girls to play one of their favourite games with.

15. Bull gayal--domestic animal belong to the family or Mithun.



Those children in reply said

“Over the graveyard of Zawlpala, thou shall find  
A blooming Tuantuah<sup>16</sup> with its scarlet flowers.  
And horns of wild animal hung up in a row.”

She threw up the string meant for a gayal among them and the children quarrelled for its possession. At last, she reached Zawlpala's grave and she cried in grief with tears flowing down her eyes. One old woman consoled her and entreated her not to cry. But Tualvungi requested the old woman, “Madam, kill me and have everything which is in my possession; I believe I cannot live any longer.” The old woman said “All right,” so saying, they unearthed the grave and found only the bones lying. Besides the bones, Tualvungi laid herself down and said “Zawpala, move a little bit, there is no room for me to sleep.” Immediately Zawpala's bones got collected in a place. Thereupon the old woman killed Tualvungi.

Phuntiha in a fit of uncontrollable anger, ran after Tualvungi. But on having reached the place, he found Tualvungi already dead. He killed himself laying down besides them. Tualvungi and Zawlpala transformed themselves into a butterfly and flew ahead of him. Phuntiha was also transformed into a butterfly and flew after them so as to chase them.

Phuntiha was jealous of the other two and tried to express his jealousy by singing,

“Giddy, gaudy butterflies,  
Flitting gaily through the skies”

But the happy pair above him were well content to leave him alone.

So goes the story about the solitary butterfly following the butterfly couple we see today.

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16. Tuantfthuah—A flowering shrub whose flower is scarlet.

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M. K. PAL

## TECHNOLOGY OF SOME OF THE IMPORTANT TRADITIONAL CRAFTS IN ANCIENT AND MEDIAEVAL INDIA

"The study of technology is an essential key to the understanding of a people's culture." This is a very significant statement made by M. J. Herskovits in his monumental work on "Man And His Works." There is no denying the fact that in man's struggle for survival, resources and techniques are his greatest assets.

In India, the study of the technology of crafts with particular reference to the ancient and mediaeval periods has not been made in a systematic manner. Some scholars have, however, tried to deal with the topic in such a way, as if the technology of crafts does not have significant bearing on the material culture of the people. A good deal of work has been done in respect of the artistic appreciation, socio-religious significance and aesthetic appraisal of ancient and mediaeval Indian art, architecture, sculpture, painting etc., but so far as the technology of crafts is concerned, only a few casual references from ancient texts or some results of stray investigations on the technology of excavated or explored artifacts have been recorded without any fruitful analysis. As a result, we have so long been deprived of obtaining a true picture of the technology of a certain craft with special reference to its evolution, development or ups and downs in different epochs of Indian History. But if we carefully examine the materials at our disposal, there is some possibility of tracing out the sequences of the technology of at least some of the important crafts flourishing in ancient and mediaeval India.

A good number of crafts are supposed to have existed during the periods under survey. As for example, mention may here be made of the manufacture of pottery, terracotta, textiles, ivory, stone or metal images, gold, silver or semi-precious stone ornaments, shell and bone objects, and other miscellaneous craft specimens including a few metal wares, which appear to have played an important role in the socio-economic life of the people of ancient and mediaeval India. Of these craft categories, examples of potter's work, ivory and metal image-casting by *cire-perdue* method at least provide us with some sort of systematic data about their technical aspects. As regards other crafts

we may have some literary and archaeological sources dealing with their mode of manufacture, but the source materials are so fragmentary that one cannot make an attempt to establish a chronological sequence of the technology of those crafts. The criterion for the selection of potter's craft, ivory works and metal-image casting by *cire-perdue* process is mainly based on the probable availability of some authentic testimony to the origin, gradual development or innovations in the technological fields of these crafts. In a word, these crafts atleast represent traditional characteristics in their line and form, style and execution, and one can expect a continuity in their age-old traditions in techniques only with timed variations.

Before we deal with the technical aspects of the aforesaid selected crafts, it will not be out of place to say a few words regarding the definition of craft. According to dictionary meaning, the word 'craft' generally means 'skill,' 'manual art,' 'skilled trade' etc. But the connotation of the word, in the view of a connoisseur of Indian art is somewhat different from the meaning given in the english dictionaries. In India, the word 'craft' is always found to be associated with the word 'art.' A craft example is, therefore, supposed to bear some artistic elements in its line and form, style and execution. It is more of an individualistic type than of a mechanical character. If we carefully examine a craft specimen, it will certainly prove that a craftsman has an individual fantasy. He produces an object which, in its highest aesthetic form comes from the intimate and organic connection between hand, eye and brain, and the rhythmic movement of the soul.

Some scholars try to include craft under the category of small-scale, cottage or household industries, which truly speaking signify some sort of mechanical enterprise in which artistic taste or aesthetic urge does not appear to be a predominant factor as we notice in the craft categories. In the former, collective efforts play an important role, whereas in the latter, individual and traditional characteristics in distinctive styles and expression remain surprisingly naive, spontaneous and vital. On this ground, a craft example is always considered to be an art specimen ; while a product of cottage, household or small-scale industries is simply regarded as a utilitarian object produced on large-scale basis mainly under the impulse of manual labour or mechanical skill. Even if we examine the ancient and mediaeval artifacts, the distinction between craft specimens and industrial products becomes inevitable.

### **Technology of potter's craft :**

Of the three crafts selected for the study of technology, potter's

craft appears to be the most vital one. In India, ancient technology had its root in the evolution of potter's art of clay modelling. The potter's craft, as it appears, can be classified into main categories such as pottery-making and manufacture of terracotta objects. The evolution of the technique of pottery-making in India probably took place in prehistoric times. In the beginning, hand-modelled pottery was introduced by the potters. As for example, the earliest occurrence of this type of pottery in association with microliths was in the late levels of Langhnaj in North Gujarat, Nagarjunakonda in Andhra Pradesh, and Birbhanpur in West Bengal. There were no kilns specially built for firing pots in prehistoric times. Pots were placed in circular pits and a small fire was built around after partially covering the pots with sherds. The potter's wheel was also unknown.<sup>2</sup>

The potter's wheel was invented at a late stage, most probably in the neolithic age when with change from a food gathering to food producing economy, the demands for storage increased. But it is very interesting to note in this context that side by side with the wheel-made pottery, the hand-made pottery was still the order of the day. This pottery was coarse-grey in appearance. Sometimes the surface was treated by a thin slip of the same clay and burnished before firing. Rounded bases were first moulded, and then the complete shape of the pot was made by placing it on the convex surface of an inverted bowl. The saucer was turned by one hand and then shaping of pot was done by the other. This sort of mechanism is still being practised by the potters in some parts of South India.<sup>3</sup>

The notable technological advancement in the pottery craft must have taken place during the Harappan and Post-Harappan periods. The pottery examples recovered from the Harappan and Post-Harappan sites clearly show how skillfully the potter-artists of these periods utilised the wheel, and painted naturalistic and geometric motifs in panels one below the other to break the monotony. So far as the clay is concerned, it was well-levigated and heavy. The firing was uniform and hence most of the pottery has a dull-red appearance.<sup>4</sup>

In the beginning of about first millennium B.C., a very interesting type of pottery called the 'Painted Grey Ware' appeared in the upper Northern part of India. This pottery was undoubtedly made on the wheel with the well-levigated clay and painting was executed in black colour.<sup>5</sup> In the second half of the first millennium B.C. we come across a significant type of pottery throughout the Gangetic Valley, which popularly known as N.B.P. (Northern Black Polished) ware is quite akin to the 'Painted Grey Ware' referred to above. This pottery was made of a well-levigated and fine clay, and was potted on a fast spinning

wheel. Some scholars suggest that the N.B.P. pots were dressed with haemitite by keeping them once again on the wheel in leather hard state before firing. In some cases it is found to be partly grey and partly brown, and in other case it is reddish.<sup>6</sup> From the N.B.P. ware sherds from Tripuri it seems that the vessels after potting on the wheel were 'wet-smoothed' and burnished. This resulted in making the surface of the pots smooth and impervious.<sup>7</sup>

During the latter periods viz. the Sunga, Kushan, Gupta, Post-Gupta and the mediaeval periods, decorated pottery is supposed to have played an important role in the technology of the pottery craft in India.<sup>8</sup> As the needs of the society grew, productivity increased. Professional jealousy must have infused the potters with the competitive spirit. Under such circumstances, the potters had to search for new ways and means to decorate the pots. Generally decoration was done by painting, stamping, making incision, by roulette, moulding and in applique designs. The pot could be painted both before and after firing. Decorations other than paintings were made on the pot when it was in plastic state. Rouletting might be done on the wheel by a tool known as roulette. Stamping, making incisions, moulding and applique designs were made on the pot when it was off the wheel. The potters used to prepare their own stamps bearing various motifs. These stamps were in negative and when the pot was stamped, the positive impression was left on it. Some powdered material like pounded clay, ash, mica or sand must have been sprayed to bring out clay impressions, otherwise the stamp would stick to the pot. The incisions could be made by any sharp or pointed tool. In case of moulded designs, moulds had to be prepared with the help of small stamps, and then the moulds were fired and used in one or more pieces for impressing the design on the vessels. The designs in applique were obtained by fingers. Sometimes the stamped and moulded motifs could also be applied.<sup>9</sup>

Apart from the decorated pottery, we also come across some other important types of wares viz. Megalithic Wares, Indo-Roman Wares specially including amphoras, rouletted and the Red-polished Ware during the Sunga-Kushana periods. The Megalithic ware was a fine product and was wheel-made and polished. The Black-and-Red ware, which is supposed to be a distinctive ware of Megalithic pottery types, was produced by a technique called the process of inverted firing, whereby the pots, kept inverted during firing, turned black at the places of direct contact with the fire viz. the inner surface and the exterior edge around the rim, while the rest of the exterior surface turned red. This ware was sometimes salt-glazed to present a shining though crackled appearance.<sup>10</sup> The amphoras, rouletted and arretine wares, which

clearly prove India's extensive trade contacts with the Western World, were probably produced in India in the same technique followed by the foreign potters. The rouletted ware was a fine black-slipped and burnished ware with a decorated pattern on the inner bottom, drawing by a machine-like contrivance called a roulette. The Red-polished ware had a bright red slip which was highly burnished. The clay was fine and completely fired. The technical peculiarity of this ware was that some parts were fashioned in moulds and sometimes, entire small pots were made in double mould and then joined.<sup>11</sup>

The next, but the most important item of the potter's craft is the *manufacture of terracottas*, which specially includes human and animal figures, dolls and toys, and other utilitarian and decorative objects. Our survey of Indian potter's craft shows that the art of pottery making started earlier than the art of terracotta making. The potters started practising this craft when the society was well-advanced both in cultural and economical spheres.

The origin of the terracotta craft may be traced in the terracotta tradition of the peasant cultures of Kulli and Zhob. About the first half of the third millennium B.C. these cultures are known to have flourished respectively in North and South Baluchistan. According to many scholars the Harappan culture of the Indus valley (cir. second half of the third millennium B.C.) bears close affinity with these cultures, and if we carefully examine the manufacturing process, style, line and form of the terracottas found at Kulli and Zhob, it is evident that the Harappan culture had significant contacts with the Kulli and Zhob cultures, and a sequence of plastic tradition may apparently be recognised.<sup>12</sup> It cannot be denied that the Harappan culture indicates a change from the isolated peasant communities to the large and highly organised urban communities and from agricultural economy to a commercial economy, but the technique employed in the manufacture of the terracotta figurines and their dresses recalls the one noticed on the Kulli and Zhob figurines with which the figurines of the Harappa culture may be said to have been closely related.<sup>13</sup> Although primitive in appearance, the terracotta female figurines like those of the peasant cultures were done entirely by the hand by pinching up or pressing down the clay by thumb and fingers according to the needs of the form. Eyes were also made of two separate pellets and the mouth, again, of a small strip applied to the face with a deep straight indentation to indicate the lips. The breasts, and the navel, wherever shown, were also by separate pellets or by cones. The ornaments were executed in separate strips and pellets, and then fixed at their appropriate positions. In the figurines of the peasant cultures the hands were usually attached to the body, while in the Harappan

figurines they were comparatively detached and either hanged down along the sides, or were spread out, or carried something with one or both the hands. In these respects, the Harappan figurines showed notable advancement in the technology of the terracotta craft. Another interesting point to be noted in this context is that, entirely modelled by the hand in the process, the figurines were all solidly built, except in the few bigger animal figurines which were known to have been worked over an inner core of straw. The straw was consumed in the firing leaving the inside hollow. The small masks appeared to have been pressed from moulds, as the thinness of the objects would indicate. After firing, the figurines were covered with a red wash, light as well as deep.<sup>14</sup>

During the Post-Harappan period terracotta finds are not rare, but their number appears to be comparatively less than those found during the Harappan period. So far as the technique is concerned, the Post-Harappan terracottas do not show any significant change either in their line or form, or in their style or execution. During the subsequent periods stretching upto the beginning of the Mauryan period we come across a very few terracotta objects. The probable reason for the non-availability of a good number of terracotta objects during these periods is still to be investigated, but it cannot be denied that the use of terracotta objects must have been limited to some extent due to some reason or the other. In the conclusion portion of this paper some hypothesis will be made in this regard.

During the Maurya, Sunga, Kushan, Gupta, Post-Gupta and mediaeval periods terracotta objects are found to have played a significant role in the material culture of the people. In the mediaeval period the craft might be on the stage of decline, yet its wide distribution in the preceding periods clearly proves that the craft was in a very flourishing condition atleast upto the Post-Gupta period. So far as the technology of the craft during the aforesaid periods is concerned, it is to be noted that mould played an important part, though hand-modelled terracottas were also in vogue side by side. The Maurya terracottas, which have been generally found at Pataliputra, the Maurya capital, Bulandi Bagh, Buxar and some other sites of Bihar, appear to be characterised by remarkably individual traits in respect of physiognomy as well as expression. In spite of a frontal treatment each represented a complete figure in the round. But for the faces which were pressed from the moulds, the figurines were modelled by the hand. The *applique* technique was also employed for delineating ornaments and head-dresses, and usually the form was burdened with them.<sup>15</sup>

Some scholars like A. K. Coomaraswamy<sup>16</sup> and Stella Kramrisch<sup>17</sup>

classified some of the Indian terracottas as the "ageless" type which was entirely made by the hand by means of such rough and ready devices as flattening and rounding the body, pinching up and pressing down soft clay according to the requirement of the form, and drawing the ends of the limbs into conical points—all done by the simple pressure of the fingers. Eyes, lips, ears, navel, hair etc. were indicated either by mere scratches or incisions, or by strips and pellets separately fashioned and applied on the summarily modelled form. The *applique* technique was also employed for delineating ornaments and head-dresses. Apart from the 'ageless' types, the distribution of the mould-made types of terracottas was very much extensive and wide-spread throughout India particularly in the Gangetic Valley during the periods under survey. It is very interesting to point out in this connection that a few terracotta moulds were recovered from Bangarh, a prolific archaeological site in North Bengal.<sup>18</sup> Among other important sites which have yielded mould-made terracottas, mention may be made of Taxila in the Punjab, Mathura, Sravasti (Saheth-Maheth), Ahichchitra, Kausambi (Kosam), Bhita and Rajghat in Uttar Pradesh, Padmavati (Pawaya) in Madhya Pradesh, Pataliputra (Patna), Buxar and Vaisali (Basarh) in Bihar and Tamralipti (Tamluk), Mahasthangarh and Chandraketugarh in Bengal.<sup>19</sup>

It has already been discussed that the terracottas had to be made either by hand or by mould. But a significant technique was evolved during the Post-Gupta period when the terracottas were also made by means of a combined technique which involved simultaneous operation of the wheel, the mould and the hand. Recent excavations carried out at the ancient site of Ahichchhatra (Distt. Bareilly, U.P.) have revealed a good number of hollow cylindrical terracottas which were apparently made on the wheel. As for example, mention may here be made of a headless male figure seated on a high cylindrical pedestal with legs hanging down. The pedestal was wheel-turned and a base plate was added for the feet. On a wheel-turned hollow cylindrical base as high as the knees, the hollow bust was worked up and then the mould-made head was joined to it. Usually the head ends in a tenon which was inserted into the hollow bust; this can be seen through the tabular bust from the other end.<sup>20</sup> Similar terracotta figurines of the same date have also been discovered from the site of Kasipur (Distt. Moradabad, U. P.). These figurines are now in the reserve collection (Safdargunj, New Delhi) of the Archaeological Survey of India. One of the specimens examined was a seated female figurine on a pedestal which was apparently made on the wheel. The pedestal bears distinctive wheel-marks both inside and outside. Terracotta examples made by this process were also recovered from the archaeological sites of Tamluk and Panna in the



district of Midnapore, West Bengal. These terracottas (lizard-headed Mother-and-child figurines) stylistically dated in the early mediaeval period are displayed in the terracotta gallery of the Asutosh Museum of Indian Art, Calcutta University. On a careful examination of the finds it is found that the body of this type of terracottas was generally made on the wheel, while the ornaments on the body, the hands, the creeping offsprings and the head were modelled by hand and then fixed in the *applique* technique. In the manufacturing process of these terracotta figurines wheel and hand played a significant role. Even the heads of these figurines were modelled by hand and not by mould. This shows a clear distinction between the techniques followed by the potters of Kashipur and Ahichchhatra, and the potters of Tamluk and Panna. The former used mould for the preparation of the head, while the latter applied hands for the same purpose.<sup>21</sup>

A survey of the technology of potter's craft in ancient and mediaeval India, therefore, shows that early man's technological skills and inventions were very much concerned with the modelling of clay, which has been regarded as the primeval plastic material, not only because of its ready availability, but also on account of its easy tractability.

### **Technology of the Ivory Craft :**

The data relating to the manufacturing process of the ivory craft may not be available in detail, but one can at least throw some light on certain aspects of the technology of the craft which is supposed to be one of the very ancient crafts of India. Evidences of the existence of this craft are found in the Harappan sites of Western and North-western India. A careful examination of the ivory examples recovered from Mohenjodaro shows that the ivory carvers of the Harappan period most probably used saw, chisel and lathe in their manufacturing process. Possibility of the use of other tools is there, but our knowledge about them is so limited that we cannot make a concrete suggestion on their functions in the manufacturing technique. The incised or curved designs and motifs on the ivory examples were most probably made by different types of chisels. Evidences of the use of black or red pigment or paste on these designs have also been found. The teeth of the combs recovered from Mohenjodaro appear to have been cut with a saw, while the petals on the ivory vessels show traces of light red pigment with which they were inlaid. The awls are supposed to be made from the die, while the battons and the shafts were most probably turned on the lathe.<sup>22</sup>

The evidence of ivory works belonging to the Post-Harappan

period is so insufficient that no attempt can be made to throw light on its technological aspects. From a dice recovered from the site of Chirand (Distt. Saran, Bihar) it appears that the technique of making designs by means of fine chisels was prevalent during this period.<sup>23</sup>

During the latter periods ranging between the 7th century B.C. and the 3rd century B.C. ivory carvers played an important role in the socio-economic life of the people. Making of designs and motifs by incision or by punching process became very popular among the craftsmen.<sup>24</sup> One ivory handle decorated with chequers and hachures has been recovered from Rugar, an important archaeological site in the Distt. of Ambala, Punjab. This ivory example shows a definite advancement in the technique of ivory carving.<sup>25</sup> During the period between 2nd century B.C. and 3rd century A.D., the ivory craft saw the hey day of its all rounded development. Apart from the decoration by incision, hatching or with mouldings, lathe played an important role in the manufacturing process.<sup>26</sup> Another notable event in the history of technology of ivory craft of this period is the manufacture of human figure in the round i.e. in three dimensional pose. For example, mention may be made of the *Sri-Lakshmi* figure from Ter (Distt. Osmanabad, Maharashtra) which unquestionably shows distinction in artistic and technical skill of the ivory-carvers of the period.<sup>27</sup> Among other significant examples of ivory works, the bands and decorated plaques including panels recovered from Begram (the ancient *Kapisa*, Mod. *Kafiristan*) deserve special mention in this context.<sup>28</sup> The technique of ornamentation of the bands and decorated plaques is very interesting. On certain bands the decoration was engraved with a style. Certain variants in this method may also be seen. The undecorated zones were eliminated by scooping with the result that the decorated part came out in light relief. The transition from simple engraving with a style to flat relief by scooping and hollowing the non-decorated zones was represented in a piece. On some plaques the contour was slightly scooped and on this surface, the craftsman did the relief work resulting in "relief in reverse." This technique reached its perfection in the larger plaques. The deeply incised contour yielded a shading, which admirably gave the effect of modelling. The composite motifs on the borders gave an excellent example of this technique. In certain plaques, the classical formulae of a very much accentuated relief as in wood work was followed. The craftsman was not satisfied by chamfering this undecorated surface; he eliminated it. The plaques and bands also show traces of painting in which red predominates. Black was used at times to accentuate the contours of the figures. The hair was also painted black and so also the pupils of the eyes.

During the Gupta, Post-Gupta and mediaeval periods examples of ivory figures in the round, caskets, bangles, plaques, throne-legs and inlaid works have been found at different sites of India. A careful scrutiny of some of the notable examples belonging to these periods shows that the craftsmen must have used different types of chisels, saw, styles and lathe in their manufacturing process. Painting of ivory objects with different colours specially with lac was also not uncommon.<sup>29</sup> The most significant advancement in the field of technology of these periods was the introduction of inlay work on wood in ivory.<sup>30</sup> For this work, fine ivory sheets were supposed to be cut into pieces of different sizes and then set into the appropriate portions cut on the wooden surface. The techniques involved in the manufacturing process of ivory carving in Ancient and Mediaeval India appear to be more or less typical and conservative, and their age-old characteristics are still found in the examples produced by the present-day ivory-carvers who may have introduced sophisticated elements in their artistic expression and aesthetic appraisal.

### **Technology of Metal Image-Casting by *Cire-perdue* Process :**

The technology of metal image-casting in India by *cire-perdue* process is supposed to be of high antiquity. Some scholars are of the opinion that the small bronze statuette of the dancing girl found at Mohenjodaro was most probably manufactured by the process of lost-wax (*cire-perdue*).<sup>31</sup> But as no mould used for casting bronze has yet been yielded from the excavations at Mohenjodaro, it is very difficult to be precise about the actual method of casting, viz. direct casting from moulds or the casting by *cire-perdue* process. The intricate patterns and designs reproduced in casting the bronze figurine would, however, indicate that most probably the 'lost-wax' process was employed, as direct casting from a mould would not produce a bronze of such a fine finish.

Excepting the above noted statuette belonging to the Harappan period no other notable examples of metal art produced by the *cire-perdue* casting process have been found in India until the Gupta period. However, at Taxila, Sir John Marshall<sup>32</sup> reports that *cire-perdue* metal-casting techniques were used at that time to produce gold and copper ornaments and other objects which were of Hellenistic styles. Moreover, two bronze images both of *Parsvanath*, belonging to the first century A.D. (now displayed in the Prince of Wales and Patna Museums respectively) as well as the image of a standing Tirthankara from Chausa, Bihar, datable to the second-third century, A.D. show that the

art of metal-casting by *cire-perdue* method may have very much flourished during the Gupta period, but the technology of the craft was also in existence during the Sunga-Kushana periods.

As already noted, the real development of the *cire-perdue* process took place during the Gupta period which is considered to be the 'Golden Age' of Indian History. Of this period, a few superb examples of *cire-perdue* hollow casting techniques are still extant, the most notable one, of course, being the famous Sultanganj Buddha. It was also during this period that the *cire-perdue* bronze casting processes were first recorded in the *Silpasastras*, the technical-cum-canonical texts used by the metal craftsmen in their production of bronze images. Mathura in the West, Sarnath (near Banaras), Magadha (now Bihar) in the central zone, and Bengal in the eastern zone, were the most important centres of this renaissance of plastic art activity. Although a number of both solid and hollow-cast bronze figures datable to the Gupta period have been recovered from different sites, the finest one is the Sultanganj Buddha which was cast in pure copper in two layers. The inner layer was moulded on an earthy, cinder-like core composed of a mixture of sand, clay, charcoal and paddy husks. The outer layer of copper seems to have been cast over the inner one, presumably by the *cire perdue* process.<sup>33</sup>

During the Post-gupta and the early mediaeval periods, copper and bronze images were also made on a large scale by *cire-perdue* hollow or solid casting technique. The most important sites, from where examples of *cire-perdue* casting processes have been recovered, are Nalanda and Kurkihar in Bihar and Sirpur in Madhya Pradesh. Bengal, during the rule of the Pala dynasty was also a very important centre of *cire-perdue* process. The work of two outstanding Bengali painters and sculptors, father and son, named Dhiman and Bitopala respectively, gave rise to a new art style in metal art. This school's widespread use of the *cire-perdue* process was to influence the manufacture of copper and bronze icons in Nepal and Tibet.

In South India the icon production by *cire-perdue* process became very popular during the Chola period (cir. 9th to 13th century A.D.). Many examples executed by the *cire-perdue* solid casting method have been recovered from the Tamil country, the most notable one, being the famous *Nataraja* in bronze. With the eclipse of the Cholas in the 13th century A.D., the excellence of the art of metal casting was affected to some extent because of the reason that the metal image art of this period ultimately merged into that of the less artistically distinguished one of the Vijayanagar period (14th-16th century A.D.).<sup>34</sup>

Apart from the archaeological finds, we have some literary sources

dealing with the lost-wax process. The literary sources may be late in date i.e. belonging to the Gupta, Post-gupta and early mediaeval periods, but the information supplied by these sources are undoubtedly invaluable. The earliest *Silhasastra* that describes the process is the *Madhu-Chchhithavidhanam* as recorded in the 68th Chapter of the *Manasara*, believed to have been compiled in the Gupta period.<sup>35</sup> As laid down in the formula for the preparation of a wax image in this treatise, the bees wax and dammar (the resinous sap of the *sal* tree) must first be correctly mixed (with a little oil) to make the prepared wax. The proposed image must first be completely visualized and realized in the mind of the *Sthapati* through contemplation until it is finally ready to be modelled in the "prepared wax." When the wax image is completed it should be purified with the fine powdered pigments (*panchavarna*). In preparing the wax models of the *murtis*, at the jointures of the component parts of the body they should be reinforced (before being covered by the clay mould) with copper rods or nails, and although the wax model will melt away (during furnacing), there should be no objection to using those supports (since they can be chiselled off after the *murti* is cast). The wax model is then to be covered with layers of mud (moulding sand) and (when dry) must be heated and thereby the wax expelled. After casting, the mould should be sprinkled with water to cool it so that it (the cast icon) may be removed after it is broken open.

The *Uttarabhaga* of *Silparatna* belonging to the Gupta period also contains valuable information about image making by both solid and hollow casting process. The first chapter of the said treatise deals with the method of preparation of different types of clay, while the second chapter deals with the techniques of casting. As described in the treatise, an image is first modelled out of the "medium clay" which is pounded on a pounding stone to fine powder and mixed with dung. This must then be covered with the 'fine clay', which is the most plastic form of the 'medium clay'. Over this (clay model) is put a (thin) layer of wax, the detailed modelling of which is done with tools made of bamboo or tamarind wood. Over this, when finished, is put an application of the 'soft clay' which contains three parts of clay plus one part of powdered pottery, mixed together on a grinding stone. An orifice is made at the bottom of the clay mould, the latter being allowed to dry and, with a slight application of heat, the wax (inside the mould) is expelled (from the mould) through the orifice. The mould is then heated red-hot and put in position, orifice end up. Into this the molten metal is poured. If the image to be cast has to be of solid and heavy, then the wax model of it must be prepared out of a solid piece of wax.

This is covered with layers of mud (clay) the wax expelled and the cavity (thus left empty within the clay mould) filled with molten metal. This will result in a solid metal image.<sup>36</sup>

The traditions and techniques of metal casting in India are also recorded in numerous texts of the mediaeval period, i.e. from 8th to 12th centuries A.D. and even later. The Jain *Anuyogadvara Churni* mentions hollow casting and *Vishnudharmottara* both solid and hollow casting by the *cire-perdue* method.<sup>37</sup> The *Vishnu Samhita*<sup>38</sup> also gives us some information about casting of image by *cire-perdue* process. Of the latter texts, i.e. the *Samarangana-Sutradhara* and the *Yaktikal-pataru*, a mediaeval encyclopaedic work which is most important from the point of view of the techniques of the *cire-perdue* process, is the *Manasollasa* or *Abhilashitartha Chintamani* (12th century A.D.) which throws much light on the contemporary metal casting by *cire-perdue* method.<sup>39</sup> This work is considered to be the best of the few hitherto known texts on the subject as it furnishes us with every detail of the process, stage by stage, from the preparation of the model to the finishing of the metal cast. The details of the *cire-perdue* metal casting as given in the *Manasollasa* are summarised as follows: (i) the model image should be prepared according to the *Navatala* measurement, (ii) besmearing the image with refined clay, (iii) clay mixed with charred, husk, cotton and a little finely powdered salt, and ground on a smooth stone should be applied three times all over and round (the image), (iv) the first layer (of clay) should be thin and should be dried up in the shade. After a couple of day a second layer should be applied again. When dry again, there should be the third coating thickly applied, (v) (one) should besmear the whole (image or model) with clay leaving the mouths of the tubes open and the wise man should dry up (the clay coating) with care, (vi) the expert should first measure the wax of the image, which has to be made either in brass, or copper, or silver or gold. Brass and copper should be taken ten times that of wax, silver twelve times and gold sixteen, (vii) then, one should encase the metal, either gold or one that is desired, with clay and coconut-shaped crucible (thus formed) should be dried up in the aforesaid manner, (viii) next (one) should melt away the wax (from the mould) by heating (i.e. the mould) in fire and should afterwards heat the crucible in cinders, (ix) after making a hole with an iron on the top of the crucible and holding it tightly with a pair of tongs (one should bring the heated crucible (out of the cinders), (x) one should place a burning wick in the mouth of the tube of the heated (mould of the) image, (xi) after bending the crucible, held tightly by the tongs, (one) should pour molten metal into the mouth of the tube in a continuous

stream and stop when it is full to the brim of the tube, (xii) the adjacent fire should be put out for the purpose of cooling (the mould with the molten metal). When the image (i.e. the mould) gets naturally cool, the expert should break up the clay (mould) very carefully. The metal image (thus prepared) verily resembles that in wax, endowed with similar limbs and other details.<sup>40</sup>

The survey of the technology of image-making by *cire-perdue* method, therefore, shows that this craft was one of the most important crafts in ancient and mediaeval India. Moreover, recent investigations carried out by Ruth Reeves on behalf of the All India Handicrafts Board and the office of the Registrar General, India, have also revealed that the Metalsmiths of Rampur (Bankura, West Bengal), Baripada, Sorponkha, Pairakuli and Asnasol (Orissa), Jagadalpur (Madhya Pradesh), Lowadih (Ranchi, Bihar) and Swamimalai (Madras) still prepare images by the age-old *cire-perdue* process in different metals such as copper, brass and bronze.

### Conclusion :

Our survey of the technical aspects of the three selected crafts viz. the potter's craft, the Ivory work and the Metal Image casting by *cire-perdue* process appears to have thrown some light on the technology of these crafts with special reference to their process of evolution, gradual development and ups and downs in different phases of ancient and mediaeval Indian History. There is no denying the fact that we do not have sufficient data which enable us to investigate in detail the earliest man's thoughts, desires, activities and achievements in the field of material culture, but on the basis of data available with us it has, however, been possible to trace out the chronological sequences of the technology of atleast some of the important crafts in ancient and mediaeval India. Our study might have been more interesting if we could get some corroborative literary data from a vast treasury of ancient Indian texts which represent the intellectual and literary activities of different periods of Indian History. The early literary sources such as the *Vedas*, the *Brahmanas*, the *Aranyakas*, the *Sutras*, the Jaina and the Buddhist literatures, the Epics viz. the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, the *Dharma-sastras* or *Smritis*, the *Puranas*, the *Kavyas* and other Sanskrit literature of the ancient and mediaeval periods undoubtedly throw sufficient light on the language and literature, Political and Legal Institutions, Religion and Philosophy, Social and Economic conditions of the contemporary periods, but about the technology of the crafts prevalent during the relevant periods we

seldom get adequate information from these literary sources. It has already been noticed that out of the three crafts selected for study, only for one craft i.e. image-making by *cir-perdue* process, we get valuable information from the literary sources datable in the later periods. For the technology of this craft in the earlier periods we have to depend mainly on the archaeological findings. As regards the technology of other crafts also we come across only fragmentary and stray references in the ancient and mediaeval texts which may throw some light on other aspects of the crafts in general, but not on the technical aspects, and thereby compelling us to depend mainly on the excavated materials.

It has already been noticed that during the period ranging from round about 1400 B.C. to 800 B.C. we come across a very few examples of significant pottery excepting a good number of "Painted Grey Wares" recovered from various archaeological sites in the Upper Gangetic Basin. Even the terracottas, which are considered to be one of the major items of potter's craft, are also rarely found during this period. On the basis of the paucity of the specimens of material culture some scholars are inclined to call this period as "Dark Age" of Indian History.<sup>41</sup> It may, therefore, be presumed that after the gradual decay of the Post-Harappan Chalcolithic Cultures there prevailed some sort of social, political and economic instability throughout the country specially in Northern India. Scholars have, however, attempted to associate this period with the migration of the Aryans and their gradual expansion in different parts of the Ganga-Yamuna Doab. The "Painted Grey Ware" which is generally associated with the early settlers of the Aryan stock has been found at Hastinapura, Ahichchatra, Kampil, Panipat, Baghpat, Tilpat, Mathura etc.<sup>42</sup> are associated with the story of the *Mahabharata*. The date of the *Mahabharata* war has been suggested by Pargiter<sup>43</sup> to be *circa* 950 B.C., which falls well within the "Painted Grey Ware" period at Hastinapura. B. B. Lal assumes that "the ware was associated with the early settlers at these sites viz the *Panravas*, *Panchalas*, etc., who formed a part of the Aryan stock in India."<sup>44</sup>

From the facts noted above, it may be suggested that the socio-economic and political atmosphere of the aforesaid period may not have been congenial to the growth and development of a particular craft or industry. The Aryan people, who were very much busy with their expansion and settlement programmes, probably could not take active interest in the promotion of arts and crafts. They most probably devoted time to produce artifacts on a large-scale only during the later period when they stabilized their position in Northern India. Before that they were mainly occupied with war with the Non-Aryans and



what they produced was only meant for defence purposes. The literary sources of the later Vedic period may, however, contain references to the practise of arts and crafts specially those of leather-workers, weavers, wheel wrights, potters and smiths, but the data available with us are so fragmentary that it is very difficult to throw any significant light on the technology of these crafts.

The cause of decline of most of the important traditional crafts (excepting image making by *cire-perdue* process) during the Post-Gupta and Early Mediaeval periods may be the same as noted in the previous paragraph, but there were some other factors also which alluded to the decline of the age-old crafts. It is known to all students of Indian History that there was a continuous struggle for empire among the ruling dynasties, and the atmosphere created thereby was not at all favourable for the growth and development of the crafts which could flourish only in the stable condition of a society. The craft of image making by *cire-perdue* was in a flourishing condition because of the reason that it might have received royal patronage from the contemporary ruling dynasties like the *Palas*, *Senas*, *Cholas*, *Chalukyas*, *Rashtrakutas* and *Pallavas* who were noted for their religious activities. During the late mediaeval periods most of the traditional crafts were in a decaying condition. The sovereign power passed into the hands of foreigners who belonged to alien races and professed a new religion of somewhat militant type. The establishment, for the first time, of two diverse systems of culture and civilization led to a definite cleavage between the rulers and the ruled such as India had never known before. As a result, changes took place in the socio-economic life of the people. The contemporary rulers, as it appears, were not very much interested in the promotion of such crafts already existing in the country. A different pattern of material culture was set up and impetus was given to such crafts and industries which could be produced in the Royal *Karkhanas* and which could only satisfy the needs of the royal families. In a word, the rural economy suffered a set back under the overwhelming influence of the bureaucratic state of economy.

The study of the technology of some of the important crafts in Ancient and Mediaeval India is just an attempt to throw some light on the traditional crafts, which inspite of their many ups and downs have, however, been persisted through the ages. The study may be taken to be incomplete in the sense that the story relating to the process of the evolution of the technology of this crafts, which must have covered a long period of time, is mainly based on very slender evidence. A good deal yet remains to be done, and it would require the unabated efforts

of the archaeologists, who with the help of their spades can bring the task to a reasonable state of completeness.

*Research Scholar, Office of the  
Registrar General of India.*

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and horse-riders of different sizes) in this combined techniques. The principal parts of body of these terracotta figures are made on the wheel, while the head, the ornaments, decorative motifs etc. are impressed from separate moulds and then applied on the appropriate parts of the body. Some parts of the body are also modelled by hand.

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## REVIEW OF BOOKS

**THE YEAR BOOK** of *Daily Recreation and Information, Concerning Remarkable Men and Manners, Times and Seasons, Solemnities and Merry-Making, Antiquities and Novelties* by Hone, William, London: William Tegg and Company, 1832. 824 and *Novelties* by Hone, William, London: William Tegg and Company, 1832. Republished by Gale Research Company, Detroit, Michigan, 1967. Price: \$ 22.50.

The book under review has more than 1650 pages and it is arranged chronologically with each day having its own special selection of curious notes. While there is no duplication whatsoever in the popular threesomes, they are similar in that each contains fresh bits of literary and antiquarian miscellany conveniently arranged and fully indexed in both general and subject indices. There are over 100 illustrations of unique objects and scenes from the past.

A biography of William Hone, the competent and controversial bookman, is given in the new introduction by Leslie Shepard, who also compiled a bibliography of books written, edited, or published by the author. Possessing a mordant social conscience, Hone was an outspoken critic and satirist of the wrongs of his day. His acquittals in three separate trials for alleged blasphemy in his publications indicated that he had not only the public support but also the backing of his fellow publishers who called him "a persecuted but triumphant champion of the press."

By combining this great social awareness with a life-long love of books, especially old books, Hone was eminently qualified to compile his lively books. Taking on some of the characteristics of an almanac, **THE YEAR BOOK** contains a monthly "alimentary calendar" of available and desirable foods as well as a plant and vegetable garden directory. Antiquarian lore, poetry selections, and observations on nature and mores are all presented in a form which lends itself to a few minutes or a few hours reading.

The interest and entertainment that the volume originally offered to both the specialist and general reader has actually increased over the years. Since the book's function was similar to that later assumed by periodicals, it supplies many rare details on old and obscure customs.

The present edition will be found useful to everybody. The publishers deserve our hearty congratulations for bringing this out.

**THE KINGDOM OF THE YOUNG**, by Verrill Elwin, Oxford University Press, Calcutta, 1968. Price: Rs. 25/-

The title of the book under review is one of the names that the

Murias give to the most cherished of their institutions,—the Ghotul. The Ghotul means the village dormitory, the bothie, the bachelors hall, which is a central institution in life and culture of the Muria, a tribal group of central India. Dr. Elwin in his book 'The Muria, and their Ghotul' had described all possible details about this institution. The book under review is an abridged version from the above title. It has twelve chapter with index. The chapters are as follows :

(1) Introduction, (2) The origin of the Ghotul, (3) Two types of Ghotul, (4) Ghotul Membership and Rules, (5) An Evening in Ghotul (6) Ghotul Discipline, (7) The Muria's Attitude to Sex, (8) The Problem of Ghotul Infertility, (9) Ghotul Recreation, (10) The Ghotul and Marriage, (11) The Ghotul and Religion & (12) Moral Standards in Ghotul.

The book under review has also 41 illustrations and 2 maps showing the position of Bastar and the distribution of the tribe in Bastar of Madhya Pradesh. The material for the original work was collected between 1935 and 1942 so the account refers to the conditions of the people are of about thirty pears ago. Still "No attempt is made to bring it up to date" say the Publishers. Although the Ghotul is in existence even to day, recent development of the country has brought many changes there which have been provided by many researchers. In fact, its organisational pattern and many other items and the discussion on group-marriage, group-concubinage, pre-nuptial chastity and infertility, experimental marriage etc. are interesting and thought provoking. So the usefulness of the book under review is unquestionable.

**HAJAR BACHHARER BANGLA GAN** (Bengali Songs of a thousand years) Edited by Prabhat Kumar Goswami, Saraswati Library, Calcutta, 1376 B.S., Demy size, 388 pages. Price Rs. 15/-

The book under review is a critical edition of more than three hundred and fifty songs composed by the distinguished Bengali composers for a period of about a thousand years. The songs are classified in ten types such as devotional songs, indigenous songs, love songs, religious and ritual songs, workmen songs, nature songs, etc. with a critical introduction and notes. The introduction is well-written and it is sure to occupy a position in the musicological literature of Bengal for it draws upon many interesting points on different types of Bengali songs. For the convenience of researchers there is an index of first line of the songs. The editor and the publishers deserve our congratulation for bringing out this critical and useful book.

## EDITORIAL

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Rural crafts constitute the best source for supplementing the family income and absorbing surplus manpower. As they are labour intensive, the capital and equipment is not large, and all members of a family can participate in the production process. The contingency of death or disability of the sole bread-winner, displacing the entire family, will not occur if all members of the family are trained and engaged in production. It is essential that the implications of the slogans "every home a cottage industry" be fully understood. Cottage industries should be development-oriented. The economic objective of producing a saleable article, the social objective of providing employment and the wider objective of creating self-reliance and building up a strong community spirit should all be simultaneously achieved, through the popularisation of rural arts and crafts or handicrafts.

In the Gandhian concept, economic self sufficiency includes economic integration and unity which becomes a major instrument of nation-building. Gandhiji envisaged each village and groups of village or regions developing their own resources not only for their residents but also for the country as a whole. The net work of community development blocks has created some initial enthusiasm among the rural folk and helped in the absorption of rural manpower in developmental activity. They would have been more successful if only they had created to the principal objective of relieving unemployment and generated and mobilised all the people's energies towards this purposeful goal. Having initiated a countrywide programme of development, we should have intensified the process of integrated development and not slackened our effort. It is not too late even now.

There is no denying the fact that, merely from the point of view of rapid economic growth, the returns are going to be more than commensurate with the large investment involved. If advanced scientific technology can offer automation, cutting down human drudgery and meeting the demand of workers for a four-day week, surely the same scientific ingenuity can offer jobs to our millions, especially when we have at our command, enormous natural resources and a work season throughout the year which advantages denied to many advanced nations.

It is regrettable that the past Plans have consistently neglected to make good use of labour resources. Successful utilisation of manpower resources should be made the key-note of future planning. Development activities in a block should be planned primarily with the object of full utilisation of available skills through a programme of productive employment. The plan should map out how much of the available manpower can be absorbed in the various programmes.

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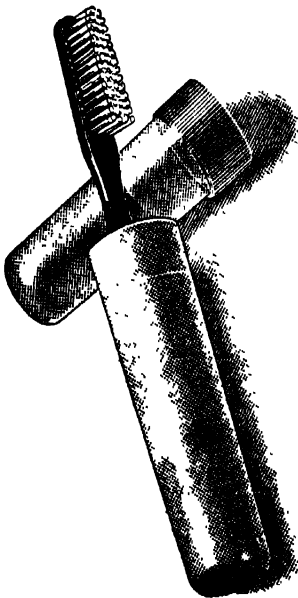
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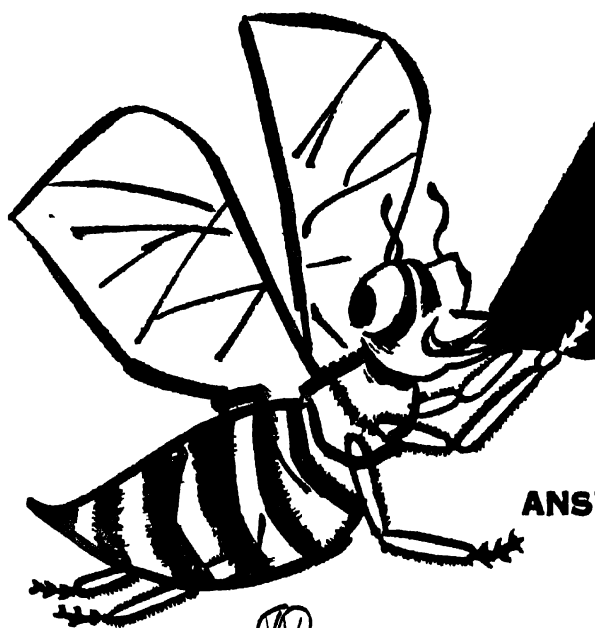
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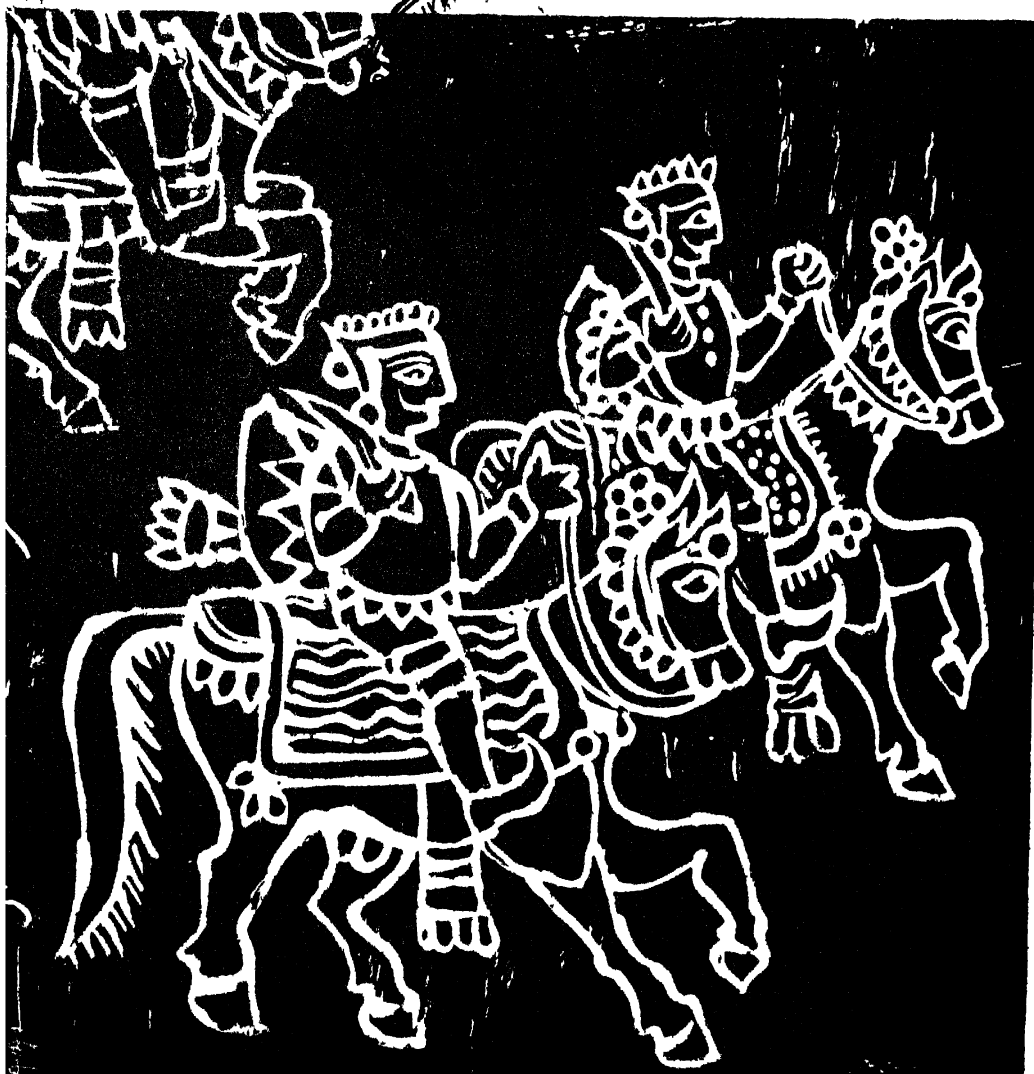
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S. K. AHUJA

## THE LEGEND THAT WAS SATI

The mention of the word SATI spurs the imagination to envision the picture of a woman of utter virtue and self abnegation who voluntarily consigned herself to the flames on her husband's pyre. Literally, the word denotes a variegated combination of purity, truth, and faith. In its hey day, consummation of the rite of widow burning was believed to confer inestimable beneficence not only on the prime incumbent of the ministration, which, inter alia, assured her abode in heaven along with her husband for as many years as hair on human body—nearly three and half crores—but also on the three races with whom her earthly existence was linked, i.e. those of her mother, father and husband, besides peripheral benefits that the priests and the general public obtained by accompanying the procession and witnessing the ceremony and by occasionally receiving departing floral gifts from the Sati.

Most ancient societies the world over were, at one time or the other, swayed by the custom of widow burning, or more rarely, burying, but after reaching certain point of zenith it seems to have faded out into total disuse through an organised social effort or a happy conjunction of natural forces. One possible reason for its early discontinuance in those societies could be the complete absence of religious sanction behind the convention which denied its opportunity and expediency of entrenchment. The custom was observed in one form or another by Chinese, Greeks, Egyptians, Slavs, Scandinavians, Germans, Teutons, Gauls and Hermites and, of course, the Indians. In fact it could be said that at varying periods of time the entire human race was shadowed by the rite. In certain cases only funeral offerings were made which included generous gifts of slaves who were slaughtered without the slightest compunction. Royal mummies of Egypt were entombed in the company of numerous slaves for rendering assistance in the after-death life.

In India, the custom could be traced back to the dawn of history. Proponents of the thesis that the custom flourished in the Vedic ages are numerous but their interpretation of the scriptural passages of questionable authenticities is not free from doubt. It is commonly known that Rig Veda treats of pleasures of life and a diametrically opposite picture of the grim and dolorous rite could not be co-existent therewith and is therefore very unsupportable in that context. It may be that in keeping with the medieval and dark forces of the earth, India could not be an exception to the observances of a social custom which was followed in many other lands. Some authorities expound that Scythians were the original race who gave birth to the idea, nurtured it and propagated the same in the lands they inhabited. A conjecture is safely offered that the concept germinated in India with the Scythians. However, the rite is said to have formed not an unimportant part in the funeral ceremonies about four centuries before the Ramayana and the Mahabharata or about 300 years B. C. In certain texts, eight centuries before Christ traces of references to Sati are to be found.

In the Rig Veda and Atharva Veda, rites of the Antyesti Samskara (the last ceremonies) are delineated where reference to the laying of the widow on the funeral pyre is available. No trace of cremation is found in these texts. The purpose of laying the widow along with her deceased husband is cloaked in indissoluble mystery. A guess may be ventured here. Since it is believed that the spirit of the departed person hovers around the dead body for sometime after the person is commonly believed dead, an ingenuous system was devised by the bigoted and gullible priesthood of eliciting permission from the dead person for allowing the widow to abide in the world and relinquish wealth to the descendants. An address to this effect was made to the dead man while the widow lay alongside the corpse, whereafter a younger brother or any other suitable person held her by the left hand urging her to rise and relinquish the world of the dead and, in many cases, further asking her to agree to be the wife of the one who was willing to marry her. (In a considerable number of cases the willing person happened to be the younger brother of the dead man or a near relative)

The description is suggestive. It is possible that in certain cases the widows may have refused to relinquish the side of their dead husbands. Their living relationship may have been intensely emotional and the woman may have been bowed down by excessive grief on the loss of her Lord, the visible God without whom life may have no meaning for her or in whose absence continuance of existence just could not be contemplated. A further conjecture is that in one of the symptomatic or pioneering instances, the woman may have been compelled to accompany her partner to doom by the vested interests of her domestic life, parti-

cularly those who coveted the considerable wealth that the deceased may have left behind. Or perhaps the burden of maintenance of the widow may have impelled a heartless patriarch to enter into collusion with the priesthood for an easy elimination of the widow, injecting the mundane suggestion with religious respectability and piousness, holding out, at the same time, a promise of great ethreal splendour in the after-life. No religious sanction ever seems to have been attached to the custom. It is only the perversion of the rooted and vested befooled of the medieval mind that twisted the scriptural stipulations to interpretation congenial to its own end. Manu, the Law Giver, does not enjoin the practice; nor for that matter is it supported by later faiths in the strands of Indian social and religious life. Manu's directions to the widow is for leading a life of an ascetic after the departure of her Lord. Provisions in innumerable ancient texts that a law contrary in spirit to that enjoined by Manu is not commendable must be taken clear note of. Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism expostulated against the practice of Sati.

It is, therefore, apparent that no single factor or consideration can be held responsible for transfixation of the practice in India, though due primarily to local influences its predominance in certain parts of the country can be explained, even as its sparse acceptance in others can be accounted for.

Possibly, the Aryans- among them principally the aristocracy- may have followed the rite for over a thousand years, yet the earliest recorded instance of Sati is provided in the account left to posterity by a Greek historian, Diodorus Siculus who may be approximated to have lived in Julius Caesar's time. The event described is the death and funeral of a Hindu General named Keteus serving under Eumenes the Greek Commander of Alexander's army. While fighting Antigenos somewhere in 316 or 317 B. C. the Indian General was killed and an obstreperous controversy raged between his two wives who vied for the honour of cremation. The issue, in deference to the accepted convention then prevalent, was settled in favour of the younger spouse as the elder was big with a child. Bedecked as bride, she laid herself by the side of her husband on the pyre. A detachment of the army marched three times around the pyre platform. The violence of flames could not draw a cry of anguish from the voluntary participant; she is reported to have bid adieu with a smile, perhaps with a wave of arm even as the flames completely engulfed her.

Certain positive conclusions can be deduced from the above account, which could conveniently be taken as a typical one of the many that preceded or followed. In the first place, the custom appears to have been confined to either the martial race of Kshatriyas entrusted with the defence of the country, or the aristocracy for some ambiguous reasons.



Second, to achieve the state of Satihood was deemed as an honour which unequivocally proves that no force was used or required in its administration and that the custom was entirely voluntarily followed, being based on unstinting willingness. Third, social forces seem to have assigned full approbation to the rite. However, no explicit legal or religious sanction seemed attached to the fashion. Successive cases of Sati appear to have created so marked an impression of selflessness, grit, valour and chivalry, loftiness of purpose and sublimity of action that the once languishing custom leaped into a raging fashion embraced by all castes and creeds. It no longer remained the monopoly of the Brahmins, the aristocracy or the militant sections of the Indian society.

Brahmanic literature, the various Sutras, Śrutis, the Buddhist and Jain sacred books do not either support or repudiate the rite. In fact, no clear mention of the existence of the custom is available.

A marked reference confronts us in the *Sambhitas* of Vishnu and Vyasa which stipulate that either the widow should lead a chaste life of celibacy, renouncing all pleasures of the senses or as an alternative ascend her husband's funeral pyre. It is indeed noteworthy that even here no clear commandment in favour of the custom is propounded.

The *Mahabharata* cites prominent instances of the rite but it is known that most of the widows of the martyrs of the Epic War did not immolate themselves, though some drowned themselves later. It is stated that on hearing of the death of her husband, Dronacharya, Kṛpā made her appearance on the battle-field of Kurukshetra in wild dishevelled fashion, but she did not achieve Satihood. Some stray examples of Sati are also to be found in the epic of the *Ramayana*.

The rite may be assumed to have figured in the Indian literature in the centuries following the birth of Christ. Kolhan's *Rajatarangini* and Somadeva's *Kathasaritsagara* mention instance of Sati: in particular, these two cardinal publications inform us of the variation that the principle of Sati came to adopt in course of time. This may well have been influenced by Scythian practice of a similar nature. Kolhan quotes instances where concubines, sisters and even mothers consecrated themselves, known as *Sahamarana* or *Sahagamana* or *Anvarohana*. Somadeva quotes the particular example of the Queen Mother committing Sati when her son Visuṣṭamalla of Nepal was killed in Samvat 878.

## II

Jena Tavernier, the famous French traveller, who made a number of trips to India, clearly portrays the custom in his reminiscences which relate to a period between 1640 and 1667 A. D. He states that the alternative to Sati open to the widow was to lead a life of unbroken misery, dis-

grace and contempt - an existence of a worth lesser than even a slave. Most often the balance of choice tilted in favour of the custom, the decision is no small measures being dictated by the overzealous relations and priests who did not tarry in portraying the picture of glory and defecation that awaited the deceased and the widow in the other world. The woman who had decided to go the way had her husband shaved and ornaments such as arms and leg bracelets, which were presented by her husband symbolising her faithfulness, were taken away. Though during the period under reference the Muslim rulers had, in a half hearted fashion, forbidden the rite as their permission to commission it was mandatory, such permission appears to have been freely granted in consideration of a sizeable bribe offered to the Muslim governors. Other ingredients, such as bedecking the lady as a bride, playing of music, distribution of relics by the would be Sati and the possible administration of drugs, narcotics and potions to induce insensibility were common to this period as in the immemorial past.

Principally three different methods seem to have been employed in the various parts of the country in the consummation of the actual ceremony. In the entire region of Coromandal, the method adopted was to dig a large and deep hole in the ground stuffed with generous quantities of firewood. The body of the husband was placed at the edge, the wife went round the pit three times, chewing betel nonstop, bidding adieu to the near ones, whereafter the body was thrown into the inferno heated like a furnace. The woman with her back towards the pit was pushed in by one of the priests and combustibles and oils were poured in liberal quantities by the relatives, the operation being accompanied by deafening beating of drums and cymbal. In certain places - mostly near the sandy shores instances of burying the dead and the living have been recorded. The woman was placed upright with the husband in her lap in a deep hole and each relation poured a bucketful of the earth and sand until the hole was covered a level with the ground or a foot or two above ground level. The relations then jumped there at to ensure that the Sati was smothered.

In the kingdom of Bengal, it was obligatory to perform the ceremony on the banks of the sacred Ganga where the dead and the alive were washed and offered to *aqni* in eternal union. Tavernier states that due to shortage of firewood in the Bengal region the bodies were often half burnt in the scanty bed of reeds and wood and were thrown into the Ganges to be eagerly devoured by the waiting crocodiles.

In the kingdom of Gujarat extending upto Agra and Delhi, the system was to build a hut of faggots and the woman placed in the middle, half reclining against a strong post with which she was fastely secured from the waist, the husband lying across her knees. From outside the

hut, fire was kindled by the priests and relatives who poured ghee and combustibles thereon to increase the intensity and violence of the flames. Melted gold and copper ornaments were seized by the priests as their rightful reward for abetting the rite.

The enlightened minds saw the evil in the practice of sending the innocent women to their dooms and each great man who supported its abolition expressed forcefully the need for its total prohibition and took practical steps in this direction. *Mahanirvana Tantra* condemned the practice in no ambiguous terms and stated that those who perpetrated the crime of burning the woman with her husband earn for themselves only a place in eternal hell. The practice is likened to the act of performance of black magic in *Medhatithi* on Manu. Annamarana, the pathetic act of dying with any article left by the husband, e.g. padookas, loin cloth, turban etc., which is nothing short of suicide, is deemed to be an act of unreligion against the spirit of the Sastras. Vedas have laid down the cardinal principle of completing one's span of life on earth which should not be shortened by voluntary or deliberate act, however socially justified such an exercise might be. Bana Bhatta was one of the earliest advocates who took an unequivocal stand for the obliteration of the rite. Bana has gone a step further in branding the perpetrators of the custom as ignorant, short sighted lot. He has brought out a new angle, in that he calls it suicide by the widows committed purely to obviate the unendurable grief sustained by them, thus tearing apart the weakness which may in many cases have been responsible in sending the simple-minded young widows to their dooms. Successive Muslim rulers, including Akbar, Jehangir and Aurangzeb issued *formans* forbidding the commission of this practice. Akbar is reputed to have personally intervened in saving the life of a young Rajputancee who was reluctant to be sacrificed for the honour of Satihood. Although the Sikh Gurus enjoined disassociation from the rite notable instances of Sati performed during and after Ranjit Singh's times by Sikhs are available. The Adigranth says 'Satis are those who live on with a broken heart'.

One of the rare instances of Sati amongst Muslims is mentioned in Tuzuk-i-Jehangiri. Rajaur (a town near Kashmir) was a Hindu dominated area before their proselytisation to Islam was carried out. As a vestige of their culture, these converts continued to practice the rite as of old, except that they buried their dead along with the living in contrast to burning them. A case of 10 to 12 years old girl is cited who was buried along with her husband of the same age. Royal decree prohibiting the practice on pain of death was issued by Jehangir after this occurrence. This decree, to all accounts, seemed intended for Muslim populace.

The half-hearted measures adopted by the ruling authorities in sup-

pression of the rite bore no appreciable results, as the Muslim governors from whom prior permission was to be obtained, were too ready to acquiesce for a consideration which was gladly offered. The social reformer, who went all out for its erosion was largely unsuccessful for lack of enforcing capability. It was, therefore, essential that a fusion of both these pre-requisites was available to eradicate the evil.

The great apostle of abolition of this searing and blotchful custom, that great man from Bengal the land that gave birth to many an illustrious sons of India Raja Ram Mohan Roy, was shaken violently after witnessing the spectacle of the performance of Sati of his brother Jagan Mohan's wife somewhere in 1811. She was an unwilling and most reluctant participant in this drama and when the flames engulfed her she made an unfruitful attempt to escape. The precipitators and the so called protectors of the mythical values administering the show took adequate measure in setting her valiant bid at naught. The priests and other relatives pinned her down to the pyre by means of green bamboos and the high level intensity of drums and other musical instruments drowned her shrieks. This inhumane sacrifice set Ram Mohan Roy thinking. His resolve for the reform gained added strength from the miserable position then prevalent with regard to the ever increasing number of women committing, or forced to commit, Sati. In one year, 1815, as many as 810 Satis were committed in Bengal. The position remained unchanged during the following two years when the number of Satis were nearly 1100, though the number decreased somewhat subsequently. No absolute reliance could be placed on these figures as to their correctness because no official machinery existed to record the events and Satis performed in the rural areas were barely noticed.

In 1818 and 1820 Raja Ram Mohan Roy published two tracts on the practice of Sati after delving deep into the religious aspects of the custom. His findings which laid bare the complete absence of any religious sanction behind the practice confounded the supporters of the rite. It was perhaps the first real attempt to put before the intelligentsia the fallacious and mythical beliefs governing the observance of the rite and doubtless the gravity of the thoughtless and blind following jolted the people severely. The then Governor General William Cavendish Bentinck had initiated the move to legally curb the entrenched practice. The humanistic minded English Governor held consultations with Raja Ram Mohan Roy and was convinced that bereft of the support from social forces the custom could be forcefully tackled under legal stipulations. The masterly minutes recorded by Bentinck recommending the passage of the statute is an archieve of lasting significance in the history of social reform in India. Fourth of December 1829 is in real terms a day to be hailed for it was on this day that Lord Bentinck

carried the regulation in Council by virtue of which all those who abetted the rite of Sati were declared guilty of culpable homicide. For this stupendous achievement he earned Macaulay's encomium "as the man who abolished cruel rites, gave liberty to the expression of public opinion, whose constant study was to elevate the intellectual and moral character of the nations committed to his charge". (The inscription appears below Bentinck's statue at Calcutta).

By any test, any socially evil custom practised by a people from time immemorial cannot be expected to cease overnight, even in the face of heavy penalties stipulated for its violation. Numerous defiances of the law were committed and the guilty punished accordingly. A large measure of success was achieved within a few years of the passage of the statute, although religious bigots appealed to the Privy Council against the law. Raja Ram Mohan Roy went to England as a supporter of the law. The appeal was ultimately rejected.

The members of the suppressed leanings found vent from time to time and the historian is confronted with a number of cases where a revival of the practice was sought to be introduced. As recently as in 1954 and even in 1961, the now rare occurrence in the field was witness. In the former case, a Rajput girl achieved Satihood in a village in Jhansi District, another one in the same year having been committed by the wife of Brigadier Zabar Singh. On November 9, 1961 another Sati came to light. A village woman immolated herself on her husband's pyre at a place known as Mitawa in Nagpur District. Nearly six to seven thousand people are reported to have witnessed the rite.

Eulogies have not been lacking in support of the selfless acts of the Satis. Hutton goes out to praise the matchless constancy and fearless indifference of death of the Indian widows. Rabindra Nath Tagore has warmly lauded the utter coldness with which the widows beautified and sanctified the death. John Dryden sang of the sterling virtue of the widows thus :

" . . . a funeral vow  
Which cruel laws to Indian widows allow  
When fatally their virtue they approve  
Cheerful in flames and Martyrs of their love."

As a measure of expression of devotion to the husband, the widows' act of Satiism is the supreme culmination of her feelings. The ideals of unquestioned loyalty and love of the Hindu woman have no equal anywhere on earth. What greater proof of the fidelity of Indian wife is needed than the fact that she voluntarily sacrificed herself? Even after the rite had been banned by law, the law enforcers were them-

selves compelled to permit its commission in one of the rare examples of human experiences graphically recorded by Major General Sleeman in his *Rambles and Recollections*. The Englishman was fully convinced, through the behaviour and discourse of the lady who had been prevented to immolate herself, that her salvation lay only with her husband who had been cremated earlier. This was the zenith of the ideals of the Indian womanhood which, with the passage of time and like everything else around us had changed (somewhat). The landscape of the Indian countryside is draped with numerous mute monuments that bear eloquent testimony to the highest ideals embodied in the character of the Indian woman.

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## BUDHA—A SIRMUR FOLK DANCE

*Budha* is an interesting dance from Rainka tehsil. This owes its origin to the bygone days when the higher castes used to dominate the low castes, their tenants, in this part of the hills. In this dance at the time of Diwali festival, Thakurs and Rajputs send their greetings to their relatives in another village through the dancing party consisting of Harijans. The dancers also get a dance to wish a Happy Diwali to their relatives and friends while their arrival is eagerly awaited in the village.

The tenants used to please their landlords in many ways. One of them was by performing *Budha* dance in their honour. This dance has become a part of their cultural life for the last so many decades and is continuing even now, though the times has changed. It is performed during Rainka fair which is held about ten days after Diwali. On various cultural meets at State and at the National level, this dance has been performed and is highly acclaimed.

*Budha* dance is held on *teej* and *chauth* following Diwali festival in the month of Kartika (Oct.-Nov.). It may, however, be prolonged for a day or so. The minimum number of men taking part in the dance is ten while the maximum may be fifty. The entire party is divided into two groups, one performs the dance and the other plays the music. Songs are sung in chorus by both.

The men in the dancing party wear a special type of a dress. The other party wears the usual clothes. The special dress consists of *pagree*—a white turban, *karta*—a shirt, *pyjama*—(a pair of breeches) which is tight at the ankles and a *cholna*—a white gown extending upto the knee having fine embroidery work with coloured threads done at the back and on the sides. Round the waist a *kamar daval* is wrapped. This is a big coloured piece of cloth.

The members of the dancing party wear ornaments mostly borrowed from their landlords. These are *dharaitoo* and *buley*—earrings having coloured stones, *har*—a heavy silver necklace, *kandi*—a small silver necklace worn quite close to the neck and *batley* heavy and thick silver bracelets.

The orchestra consists of *haluk*—a longish type or small drum, *Damanu*—a small *nagara*, *chhunku*—a brass plate, *banshi*—a flute and *dhak*—a small type of *haluk*.

On the appointed day, Kohs from each household collect in the open

compound of the village temple. They carry their musical instruments. The special dress is, however, not put on at this stage. A prayer known as *sewa* is first sung before the village deity. After this they break into two or three groups and go to the houses of their landlords. They sing songs in their praise. This too is known as *sewa*. After singing for about two hours, they seek permission for a break. The landlord then asks them to visit the particular village where he has given married to his own daughter or sister. The dancing party then begins its journey to that village, and reach there before dawn.

Before entering the village boundary, music is played. First, they call at the village deity and after singing the *sewa*, they move towards the particular house as directed by their landlord. Here they sing *sewa* in honour of the family for one hour and then retire for a short rest.

After a brief *pause*, the *budha* dance begins. The leader of the party directs others to put on the dress and jewellery as described above. They dance to the tune of the music. The dance is held in a circle which goes on moving slowly. They wave a handkerchief or a *dangra* from time to time. The steps are not subject to any rules. The tempo of the dance goes on increasing slowly with the music. The dance continues till in the evening. After interval, they go to the village deity and again sing *sewa*.

The family serves the party with delicious food like rice, *potanda*, ghee and jaggery. The party distributes parched grain or *muda*, to the married daughters of the village. In return they receive double the *muda* and grains. The landlord gives them one rupee each. At night, they sing and visit other houses.

Next morning, the party returns to their village. On their way back, they first visit their village deity and sing *sewa*. Then they go to the landlord's house and sing songs. He receives *muda* and walnuts from the hands of the members of the dancing party. In return, Thakurs serve them with good dishes and give them one rupee each. Thus the *budha* dance comes to an end. The *sewa* and other folk songs sung during the dance are given here. Of late, light film songs have made their way into this dance.

The following *Sewa* is sung in honour of the village deity.

ऐथे केसग थानो  
ऐथे देवरा थानो  
देवे पूजु ला कुणो  
भाटे बामण पूजे



भाटे बमणा रा केओ रा जाये  
 भाटे बामण दा राजा सोये  
 रात गये रैणा व्याये  
 रेणा व्याये के भाटे रोआ जगत होये  
 तेड़ा रोये भाटे घोते लाये  
 भाटे रोआ बामणा पनायरे दा जाये

*Gist* :—This is a song sung in praise of Thakur, when Harijans visit the house of their landlords. The song is in the form of questions and answers. Whose house is it ? This is Thakur's house. Where is Thakur ? He is fast asleep. All elders and children are also sleeping. Who will wake them up ? His wife would wake them up. Who will kill the lice in his beard ? His wife will do the job. She will also apply the mustard oil to his beard and comb it. In the closing lines, they sing that they have sung enough in praise of Thakur's family and house.

Following is another song which is tuned with dance :

नरगु भग्न वुआडा चाले  
 सीते चाला जयालो  
 खोश चला सीलावड़े  
 साइवु गोपाल  
 सयाणा चला सरताना  
 मायजो दा पेजु  
 जनीआ और मोंकु चले गनोगे दे  
 रजाने रा बानु  
 माया चला जणा  
 जामा चला जमाड़  
 छरता चला जड़ेनदा  
 मुगड़ीया चला घमाड़  
 वेदमा चला नारा सेऊ  
 जगता चला सुणा कुवाणा  
 खोड़ी चला दराबेल

वड़गा दाणा  
 माठ चला गठुवाड़  
 मड़ोली दा काणा  
 चोवु चला जब डोगी  
 ठीकरा दा माडु  
 रवागा चला अनराड़  
 कड़से मराडु  
 भाटे ले आ वामणा नावणा ले करे  
 भाटे ले वामणा ले कुजा दा पाणी भोरी  
 भाटे रा वामणा देवठी दा आये  
 देवठी मान्दो लीऊ लेओ  
 देवते २ पूजनो लाये

*Gist* :—'This also is in questions and answers form. Whose place is this? It is *devata's* place Who worships the deity? Brahman worships it. Where is he? He is sleeping. Is it about to dawn? Yes, Brahman has got up. Has he put on the clothes? Yes, he is going to spring to take bath. He has also filled the jug with fresh water. Now he enters the temple and worships the *devta* with incense.

Following is another song in praise of Thakur :

ऐथे थी केसरो थानो  
 ऐथे रा ठाकरा रा थानो ।  
 ठाकरो केई राये जाये,  
 ठाकरो राहे पलो सुती ।  
 सुते बाड़ीये बोड़े,  
 सूते दाड़ीये भोडे ।  
 सुते जगाओ ला कुणो,  
 हीन्दु राजा री बेटी ।  
 दाड़ी दी भोरी यो जुये,  
 इन जुओ जूओली कुणो,  
 हीन्दु राजा री बेटी ।

दान्ता रे कानाटे वुओले,  
 हीन्दु राजा री बेटी ।  
 शेरे ओ रा लाओ रे तेले  
 दाठी ली वेळणी वैले ।  
 हो गई ठाकुरा थारी सेवा,  
 थाने रा गाणा पन्थर नायी  
 ठारी की सेवा ।  
 लाला चला जालाउ  
 रेडणी दा सीगा  
 रुणा यला बोटा  
 सारी पाशा रा सीगां  
 मीड दा चला बग्विल  
 पलरे दा राणा  
 बारो भुजा रे चोतरू चाला  
 छीचा सयाणां

*Gist* :—This is sung in the memory of two clans. About five decades ago, the people of this area were divided into two clans known as *Pashi* and *Shati*. Relations between these two clans were never cordial. People of Shilwadey village were known as *Pashi* and those of Bhawai were known as *Shati*. Once all the *lumberdars* of these villages and other villages gathered at a place Thapal near Rajana to bury the hatchet and to move towards a compromise.

During the course of this meeting, there rose a quarrel and Chhicha *sayana* of *Shati* clan was killed by the other party. The meeting ended without any result. His dead body was cremated at Ludhiana village. A message was sent to Maharaja at Nahan about the murder. He sent a small contingent of his army to suppress the people of Shilwadey village (*Pashi* clan). The army gave a good punishment. In this song the names of all the *lumberdars* have been given.

*Office of the Census Operations, Himachol Pradesh.*

S. S. SHASHI

## FOLK SONGS AND DANCES OF THE GADDI'S

Song and dance are the most natural traits of a race. They provide an effective yardstick of their temperament and the manner they react to the surrounding joy and beauty.

Of all the uninhabited Himalayan people the Gaddis are easily the most remarkable ones.

In features, manners, dress and dialect they are distinct, differing basically from the rest of the population. They mainly reside on the snowy range of Dholadhar which divides Chamba from Kangra. A few have trickled down to the valleys which skirt the base of the cham but a vast majority still live on the highest above. They are simple, virtuous and sturdy. Their womenfolk are beautiful, calm cheerful and bashful. They are indeed a picture of simple elegance. Raja Sansar Chand II of Kangra developed a fancy for a Gaddi girl and married. She was called Gaddi Rani. And this event is rightly the theme of a song and dance.

The Gaddi was grazing the goats  
And Gaddan, cows  
Her earthen pitcher broke on the rocks  
The cows ate grass  
Raja Sansar Chand saw the event and young face  
He fell in love  
And married her.

*Brahmaur, the abode of Gaddis:* Brahmaur, a village of Chamba district in H. P., is the abode of the Gaddi's. One has to travel 22 miles on foot or on pony from the nearest bus terminus at Gehra, to reach this village.

It is an important village, and is distinguished by its 1300 years old temple. To Hermann Goetz, the scenic beauty is comparable to the finest of Switzerland. With such a gorgeous landscape and romantic atmosphere, the Gaddi girl is deeply in love with the hills of Chamba.

Gori is deeply in love  
With the hills of Chamba  
In every home is a *bindlu*

In every home a *tiklu*  
In every home are calm brides  
Gori is deeply in love  
With the hills of Chamba

Mani Mahesh is covered with perennial snow, and is regarded as sacred as Kailash. God Siva is believed to have lived here. There are many temples where Lord Siva is worshiped in a typical form. The land of Siva has been the theme of songs and are known as *Anchali*. One of the famous *Anchali*'s goes as under :

O Lord Siva, if you fulfil our desires  
We shall give you a *Nuwala*  
And we would make an offer  
Of eighty goats and eighty four sheep.  
O' God, we want your *darshan*.

And that is why the Siva was so pleased that when —

“The Gaddi tended his sheep on the grass  
The Gaddan offered oblation of flowers to Siva  
He gave sheep to the Gaddi  
But he bestowed beauty on the Gaddan”.

A marriage song goes as under :

“Who is that beautiful girl  
Sitting with her hair uncombed  
Who is sitting with his backturned  
Oh, Gori is sitting with her hair uncombed  
And *Istar* (Siva) is sitting with his backturned”.

*Costume* : Turbaned Gaddi, can be distinguished by his *Chola* (a long wooden coat) and *Dora* (woolen rope). The *chola* tied round the waist with a black rope worn in many lines. It varies from 30 to 200 feet in length and weight about 2 to 3 seers. A Gaddi woman wears a shirt called *Kurti* of cotton cloth and covers it with *chola* or *chola* made woolen cloth. The woolen rope is an essential wear for all including children of five years. The womenfolk are very fond of jewellery. The Gaddi dancer always prefers to dance in his traditional and usual dress.

A Gaddi girl wants to buy some 'Bedis' from the market and requests her relations in such a manner that our sympathies are enlisted on hearing the song which goes thus.

In the bazar of town 'Bedis' are being sold  
 O my uncle please purchase it  
 The cost is too high, how can I purchase it ?  
 O my father's younger and elder brother  
 please buy it  
 Neither of my father's brothers purchase it  
 So my pious mother, please purchase it.

*Romantic Songs :* During my study of the folks of the Gaddis I found that the Gaddis were leading richer and emotional life than any other tribe of the Himachal Pradesh. The Gaddi is a care free and happy go-lucky fellow. When a Gaddi shepherd plays on his flute, nature nods its head in tune : the hills vibrate with joy and the distant hill girl dances in ecstasy. The love-sick shepherdess starts to sing in reply :

1. I miss you terribly my Gaddi  
 I miss you very very much.
2. This *Patwari* will not write a letter for me  
 though I beseech him a thousand times.  
 I miss you very much, my beloved Gaddi
3. I go alone to the spring  
 and drink there in seclusion  
 And suddenly your memory pierces my heart  
 I miss you very much, my beloved Gaddi.
4. With naked feet I climbed the hill  
 Hoping to see you when you will return  
 But alas ! my feet are pierced by the sharp thorns  
 And of you there was no sign  
 I miss you very much my beloved Gaddi.

Here are a few lines of another famous song which relate to the broken love story of Kunjua and Chanchalo--translated by Dr Karan Singh.

1. I weep profusely  
 While washing clothes, O' Kunjua  
 Come and speak to me,  
 Please come and talk with me.
2. In your hand is a silk handkerchief.  
 O' Chanchali  
 And my ring is on your finger  
 as token of our undying love.

3. Do not leave tomorrow night O Kunjua  
Do not leave me.  
I would sacrifice my life  
To keep you here.
4. I must go tomorrow night, O Chanchalo, .  
I must go far ; I have pressing work which  
I cannot ignore.

Many songs about another shepherd Rupnu have been composed. When Rupnu returns to his home, his beloved is waiting for him.

These folksongs are quite simple in composition and are sung with an amazing clarity of expression and each line is repeated a number of times before switching on to the other line. They are sung in high-pitched voice, mostly by women or shepherds while tending their sheep or goat.

*Folk Dances :* The folk dance of Gaddis is of a uniform pattern and is performed by a group who move in a circle swaying their bodies half way round at each step in an easy and graceful manner with the arms alternatively raised over the head hanging down. The dance is always accompanied by songs. The men and women usually dance in separate circles and do not intermingle.

The dance numbers of the menfolk is vigorous and sometimes boisterous too. But the woman moves slowly and gracefully. They clap their hands at regular intervals, and after every 2 or 3 steps sit down on their hunches facing each other and thus they present an attractive sight.

The tempo rises with the notes of the orchestra consisting of *shenai* and *dholak* (Dundum). The musicians sit outside the circle and play their instruments. The dance is full of verve and aplomb and occasionally reaches a frenzied stage with their costumes flying as the dancers whirl round.

Usually the dancers enter the arena after a drink of *sur* (wine). Dances by individuals are generally timid while collective one starting with graceful steps of a happy contented and peaceful people, lead to a frenzied state. An interesting feature is that Gaddis raise a chord 'ho-ho' at the top of their voice, while women dancers alone sing.

*Editor "Saink Samachar", New Delhi.*

## SIGNIFICANCE OF NANDI FESTIVAL AMONG THE KONDA DORAS OF ARAKU VALLEY

The Konda doras are one of the scheduled tribes<sup>1</sup> in Andhra Pradesh. They are known to their neighbours, under different names, viz., 'Kondalu', 'Kondakapu', 'Pandavarajas' and 'Kondaporja'. According to their mythology which narrates the creation of this Earth by Lord Bhimasura, they are called Kubi.

The Konda doras are inhabiting the five adjoining coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh, viz., Srikakulam, Visakhapatnam, East Godavari, West Godavari and Krishna. They are found in large numbers in Visakhapatnam district with a population of 44,759.<sup>2</sup> The total population of this tribal community in the State comes to 86,911.<sup>3</sup>

The Konda doras celebrate a festival to 'Nandideyyalu' in the month of February (*KOGRIPUSA NELA*). This is not an annual festival. They celebrate this festival in three successive years while in the three subsequent successive years they do not observe any ritual to this deity.

### Origin of Deity :

There are different versions regarding the origin of the deity. However, the main theme stands the same while minor events vary from one version to the other. According to the folk tale narrated by Somili Naidu of Panasavalasa (Soyva Mutta in Araku Valley), the deity was born in the sea. As the story reveals there was neither Earth nor Life, in this world before its creation. The whole surface was flooded with water like a great ocean. Then Lord Bhimāsura, the Creator of this world, created a man and a woman and kept them in a gourd which was thrown into the water- sea. Later on, He created the Earth, the fauna and the flora. He brought the gourd on to the surface of the Earth, broke it down, bringing the first man and woman on to this world. They got married and in course of time begot seven children. The first of the seven children created the 'Kubi' tribe.

Along with the first man and woman were born two deities called Nandideyyalu in the sea. They are sisters. But they were not brought to the surface of the Earth by Lord Bhimasura. The deities were playing and dancing in the sea. They prepared a basket and began to beat it which produced some rhythmical sounds. This implies that the



deities were not aware of the modern type of musical instruments and that a basket represents the primitive type of musical instrument.

One day a group of seven brothers of the 'Kubi' (or Konda dora) society went on a hunting expedition. On the way they came across a red Eagle called *SOMKISILA GEDDA*. It is said that this Eagle used to carry away men and animals just as a kite carries away chicken, kills and eats them. One of the seven brothers shot the Eagle with his gun. One of its wings fell down. It flew to some distance with the help of the second wing and fell down dead.

Then they proceeded further and found a group of mighty flies called *FEMKARA YEGALU* in a rock cave. At that stage the flies did not know the construction of a nest, hence they were living in caves. It is said that these flies used to kill human beings. So they wanted to destroy its race by a strategy. The brothers approached the flies and said that they were very much displeased with their pitiable conditions of life. They further said that they would construct a nest for them on a tree where they can live comfortably. Taking the consent of flies, they constructed a nest on a tree with tree bark. The flies were very much pleased with the help of men and expressed their desire to enter into bond friendship with them to which they gave their consent. The mighty flies secured a goat and served meat with rice to them. On the third day after the feast flies entered the nest to live in there whereupon the brothers set fire to the nest. All the flies died in the fire except a male and a female who escaped death by flight. The brothers prepared a musical instrument called *DAPPU* from the goat's skin which was killed to give them a feast.

They went on further till they found the sea. They saw two deities dancing and singing on the sea with a rude musical instrument (basket) in their hands. The seven brothers were anxious to go close to them to enjoy their company. But there was a thick fencing of a type of plant called *cowach (DULAGONDI)* encircling the sea on all sides. They felt sad because they could not enter into the sea. Suddenly a field rat (*DONTIYELUKA*) came to them and enquired about the reason for their sadness. They expressed their desire to meet the deities which was not made possible by the presence of thick fencing of *cowach*. The field rat said that it could help them by cutting some leaves and stems. Finally the way was made ready for the brothers to enter into the sea, whereupon they approached the deities. Then the deities enquired about musical instrument in their hands. The brothers informed the deities about their hunting expedition and explained the significance of the musical instrument. They asked the deities to throw away their rude musical instrument and began to play on the *DAFPU* whereupon the deities began dancing in joy which went on for a week without taking food and

water. The deities got tired and asked them to go back to their homeland. The brothers requested the deities to pay them for their labour and asked them to gift away their tone (voice), song and education to the brothers. The deities refused to part with them, but agreed to teach them these skills. The brothers accepted the offer and learned them from the deities. After acquiring these skills they wished to go to their homeland. While departing the deities expressed their desire to visit the homeland of the brothers and asked them to bring their *DAPPU* when they come to invite them to their homeland.

The brothers revealed the whole story of the deities to the community. They went back to the sea to invite the deities to their homeland. They all started their return journey with a carrying beam across the shoulder of a person in which the deities are placed on one side and the Tone (voice), Song, and Education on the other side. On the way, it rained heavily without the presence of clouds in the sky. While they are mounting up a huge mountain called *KOKKIRIGHATI* the rope network of the carrying beam broke down whereupon they re-knotted the rope network and proceeded further. While descending the *NERAKA GHATI*, the carrying beam itself broke down. They felt very sad. They took fibre from an insect called *POTMADIKA* and prepared the rope network forming a lodgment at each end of the beam. At that time a mighty ant came to their help and offered one of its legs to be used as the carrying beam. It is said that the leg of the ant looked like the trunk of an elephant.

They proceeded further and found a hillstream in hoods which they had to cross. While crossing the stream their clothes got choked. On the other bank of the stream they took rest for a while to dry up their clothes. A bird called *CHHIPIDIPITTA* suddenly came and swallowed the tone (voice) before it disappeared from the scene. Finally when they reached the outskirts the deity refused to enter into the village to take its abode in a nearby anthill. For that whenever they do this festival they have to bring that deity to the village to celebrate the festival. They follow the same even now to honour their commitment. As a preliminary preparation on an auspicious Saturday in the month of February they erect a pendal. On the next immediate Friday the priest is asked to pour *Maddi* (Rice beer) on the anthill which results in the growth of the same (anthill). The newly grown part of the anthill is removed to mix with a kind of wax called *Masara Tene mynam* and water to prepare the images of two bulls. As a part of decoration the broomsticks for tails and the horns of *Garudupilli* (a kind of cat) in the place of hands are attached to both the images of two bulls. Two garlands are also prepared with all the available flowers to decorate the two deities before they are placed in the house of the priest. The duration of the

festival is five days. On the next day evening the deity is taken round the village in procession. Generally the deity is carried by two female members of their society. They were stopped before every house to offer fowls. In the meantime the square yard is plastered with cow dung by all before each house and the priest sits there with a new cloth on his thighs. The house-wife keeps nine sorts of grains on that cloth, and another new cloth of a towel size is spread before the priest. Amidst the singing of the priest with excitement, some of the grains fall on the new cloth spread by the women of the concerned house. They believe that it is caused by the deity and they take it for granted that those grains which fall on the cloth spread opposite to the priest will give bumper crop during that season and others do not. The same procedure is repeated throughout before the deity is placed in the centre of the village. It is followed by drinking and dancing by the community.

Even on the third day the deities are taken round the village in a procession. On the evening of the following day an unmarried girl and boy are decorated in a fancy dress to act as *Malidangidi* and *Malidangada* respectively. All the villagers take them round the village simply to enjoy the fun of it.

On the last day the images of the two deities (bulls made of mud) are thrown out in the stream in the outskirts of the village and get themselves satisfied as if they have sent them to their original abode—sea.

### **Significance :**

The belief is that some serious calamity befalls the community when they do not observe the ceremony to this deity. Every family in the village should observe the taboos and ritual behaviours associated with the ceremony, a breach of which causes supernatural intervention in the shape of troubles to the family and the interventions of the head of the community of penalizing the defaulter. The informant recalled a fire accident in a house which was attributed to the unceremonial behaviour of the house wife on the occasion of the ceremony to the deity. They should not rethatch their houses prior to the celebration of this ritual every year. They should not even cut the broom-sticks from the forest. However, these taboos are not observed in those years when they do not celebrate the festival. It is also believed that the deity visits the priest in his dreams and warns him of the forthcoming danger to the community, if there is any.

The ritual has also got some economic significance. The agricultural prosperity of the family is predicted by the grains that fall on the new cloth spread opposite to the priest and the deity when the latter is taken round the village in procession. The grains are counted as soon as they

fall on the cloth. The larger the number of grains of a particular type that fall on the new cloth the greater is its yield in that year. The belief is carried into practice in subsequent years also till another ritual is observed to the same deity.

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#### NOTES

1. Scheduled Tribes list (Modification Order 1956). A. P.
2. THE SCHEDULED TRIBES IN ANDHRA PRADESH Published by Tribal Cultural Research & Training Institute, December 1963.
3. *Ibid.*

#### NOTE & NEWS

Twenty-Second Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies will be held at San Francisco from April 3 to 5, 1970 where the following scholars of India who are now in U. S. A. in connection with their researchers and studies will take part :

##### *Chairman*

Bhabagrahi Misra, Hartford Seminary Foundation  
Sociological Analysis of a Chinese Folktale

*Wolfram Eberhard, University of California, Berkeley*  
The Tradition of the Fidalgo in the Folklore of Goa

*Lucio Rodrigues, Goa College, India*  
The Institution of Marriage in Bhojpuri Folksongs

*Har'S Upadhyaya, Fort Valley State College*  
The Indian Oedipus

*A. K. Ramanujan, University of Chicago*  
Discussant : *Robert J. Adams, Indian University*

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A meeting of the members of the Indian Folklore Society was held at 3, British Indian Street, Calcutta on February 14, 1970 where the programme for the current year was adopted. Sri Sankar Sen Gupta, General Secretary, placed the programme.

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Under the auspices of the Folk Music and Folklore Research Institute, Calcutta a folk musical performance by Dr. (Mrs.) Purnima Sinha, Dr. Surajit Sinha and their daughters was held at Calcutta on February 28, 1970 which was attended by both the scholars, performers enthusiasts and interested persons of both the sexes.

## A NOTE ON BALLADS—WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO RAJASTHAN

Ballads form an important part of the immense volume of folk-literature. Most scholars, who have studied this form of folk-literature have defined it as a story told in song.<sup>1</sup> Gerould also describes it in the same fashion,<sup>2</sup> of course he says that the story is told objectively. Some scholars, when stressing the story and song aspect in a ballad, give much importance to its oral transmission. Thus there are three characteristic properties which are generally talked about with reference to a ballad, namely.

- (i) story
- (ii) music
- (iii) oral transmission.

In these widely discussed properties of the ballads some include refrain as 'a must'. To this, my humble suggestion is that refrain is not always found in the ballads. When surveying the ballads of Rajasthan, I have discovered that in certain ballads there is no refrain at all.

I admit, the essential presence of a long story and music in a ballad. Also, there is oral transmission. But, with these essentials I also wish to emphasise the expression of the tendencies of the primitive mind. This is the only point where a ballad differs from an epic.

Folk literature is the verbal expression of 'Folk'. Here, 'Folk' implies those people who still possess the remnants of the primitive mind and are surviving in the flow of tradition without the egoistical feeling that undercuts it. Naturally the tendencies of primitive mind is here in the expression of this form.

Specially, in the ballad, where a story recounts the whole life, we find this expression more obviously present. The tendencies of the primitive mind have been studied during the last century by a number of scholars. James Frazer, Franz Boas, Levy, Bruhl, James Harvey Robinson are famous in this area of study.

1. (a) 'Ballad is a Lyrical narrative' Hazlitt.  
(b) 'Ballad is a song in which some story is told'-- Kittredge.
2. 'a folk song that tells a story with stress on the crucial situation'—Gerould.

Existence of the primitive mind is an acknowledged fact now-a-days. Every one of us has the tendencies of the primitive mind. These tendencies play an important role in our life. Our actions, knowingly or unknowingly are guided by these. As civilization advances, these tendencies, though fading, take different shapes.

Some important conclusions about the primitive mind are being given here. Simultaneously the manner in which these conclusions are expressed in the ballads, also being shown.

(i) Primitive mind used to be *prelogical* i.e., it could not impute a suitable cause to a particular action. It used to form accidental associations. This tendency can be discerned in almost the whole of the folk literature. We find that the hero of a particular ballad is not born in the way in which an ordinary human being is from. Some times the woman swallows a sacred barley, some times in the dream the moon enters the womb of the woman and the hero with extraordinary qualities appears, i.e., the primitive mind, for the birth of a child, never thought the intercourse compulsory. In most of the ballads of Rajasthan we find this. In the ballad '*Nihalde Sultan*' Sultan, the hero, is born of the sacred barley given by '*Guru Gorakh Nath*'. In the ballad '*Pabuji*', also, '*Pabuji*'s heavenly birth is described. In '*Gogaji*' ballad, Goga's birth is attributed to '*Gorakh Nath*'.

(ii) Animistic thinking is the other important property of the primitive mind, i.e., it felt a soul not only in itself but also in all other objects of the world (i.e., the tree, the river, the mountain, everything contained of a soul). These could take or assume any form they liked. There is the goddess of forest, the goddess of the river etc. These goddesses of nature help the hero in achieving his goal. When he is in distress these supernatural beings appear in human form and help him.

In Bhojpuri and the Rajasthani ballads this tendency is widely expressed. A slight extension of this is the behaviour of animals and birds like human beings, they talk, they help the sufferer.

In '*Nihalde Sultan*', a *tortoise* helps the hero of the ballad.

(iii) The third tendency of the primitive mind may be termed as ritual thinking, i.e., to believe that by performing an action through a special method a particular goal can be achieved, e.g., in '*Nihalde Sultan*' ballad the father of *Sultan* is asked by '*Gorakh Nath*' to perform a certain rite to get a son.

(iv) The fourth is fantasy thinking, i.e., the primitive mind could not differentiate between the real and the phantasm. That is why we find in ballads the flying horses, supernatural creatures and actions. Franz Boas described it as :

'In primitive life, religion and science, music, poetry and dance,

myth and history, fashion and ethics appear inextricably interwoven' (The Primitive Mind, Page 226).

There are many corollaries of these four fundamentals which are found expressed in ballads.

These do not get expression in the creation of a learned poet, even if their shadow appears the manifestation, it is not as direct as is found in *Folk-lore*.

That is why I want to stress this point. Even Alexander H. Krappe has defined ballad as -

'The popular ballad is a simple narrative poem relating epic events as seen through the medium of a lyrical temperament, popular in origin or by transmission, and fitted for oral circulation' (The Science of Folk-lore, page 173).

In this well formed definition also the three factors already said have been repeated.

I think it would be more proper to define a ballad as follows :

A ballad is a long story containing the tendencies or shadows of the primitive mind, sung in song with possibilities of oral transmission.

After defining a ballad we can concentrate upon the ballads of Rajasthan.

Rajasthan is rich in ballads. Ballads of Rajasthan can be put in five categories which are as follows

1. Heroic Ballads. (Veerkathatmaka Lokgatha).

- (a) Bagrawat
- (b) Pabuji
- (c) Tejaji
- (d) Gogaji
- (e) Doongji Jawari
- (f) Galadeng (on the name of Gulal Singh).

The above heroic ballads are much popular in Rajasthan. All of them are based on the lives of heroes who sacrificed their lives for the sake of cows or to fulfill their words. In the display of the ballads 'Bagrawat', and 'Pabuji', a screen<sup>3</sup> colourfully painted with the events described in the ballad is also used. The singer wears a special Rajasthani dress and play upon the *Been* (an instrument with strings and two drums which is known as lute).

He points out the relevant scene on the screen. These ballads are so much liked in Rajasthan that people are shown to enjoy them all night. The above ballads have traditions of oral transmission and they

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3. For the ballad, have come the word 'lok gatha', in Hindi language.

4. The screen is called as phad in Rajasthan.

are, even to-day, sung. I have heard and collected from the singers.

from the

## 2 The second category is—

### Love Ballads.

1

- (a) Dhola Maru
- (b) Jalal-Bubna
- (c) Nagji Nagvanti
- (d) Sorath

These ballads are sung by *Langhas*, a 'Jati', (community) found in Jadhpur and Jaisalmer. They play upon *Sarengi*. Generally two singers sing the ballad. These love ballads are sung in different *ragas*, such as 'Mand', 'Desh', 'Sorth' etc., and in different time. For example the singer would not like to sing 'Sorath' in the daylight.

The love ballads are so delicate in nature that they prevail upon the listeners and the singer finds himself transported in a world full of love and pleasure. In the end of these ballads, one of the two—the hero or the heroine dies. Still the ballad remains a sweet comedy, because suddenly Lord Shankar appears and brings back the dead to life.

'Nagji Nagvanti', 'Dhola maru' etc., are beautiful love ballads of Rajasthan.

## 3 Romance Ballads (Romance Kathatmaka)

'Nihalde Sultan' is a ballad full of suspense. A chain of supernatural feats is there. *Jani* a character travels to heaven to get the flowers of 'Kalpa-tree' and comes back. There are flying horses, talking tortoises and flying shoes. Sultan the hero is born of the sacred barely given by 'Gorakh Nath'. He fought fifty-two wars. These wars have been described objectively in this ballad. The original form, collected from the singer, consists of 2500 pages, and is available with Dr K. L. Sahal of Pilani, Rajasthan. The ballad is sung by *Jogis* on *Sarengi*. 'Sultan' the hero has been put as an ideal king, who never speaks lie, who has dedicated his life for his subjects. This ballad is sung in Haryana also. But the quality of ballad found at Haryana is inferior to that of Rajasthan. This ballad contains motifs from the Ramayana, the Mahabharat, Kathasaritsagara etc. All the characteristics given in the definition of the ballads are found in this ballad.

## 4 Didactic (Nirved Kathatmka).

- (a) Bharthari
- (b) Gopichand.



These two ballads are also sung by Jogis on Sarengi. They are concerned with the famous kings, Gopichand and Bharthari. How these kings abandoned the worldly affairs and became the disciples of 'Guru Gorakh Nath', is shown in the ballads. The ballads are full of 'Karuna Rasa'. These ballads are available throughout Rajasthan and perhaps in other parts of the country.

#### 5. Miscellaneous.

Under this category fall those ballads which have been derived from the 'Mahabharat' or Purans such as,

- (a) Byavlo (Marriage of Lord Shankar)
- (b) Ahemdo (Abhimanyu, the son of Arjun)
- (c) Amba Rasa (the story connected with Gandhari and her dead sons)

The stories told in these ballads are different than that of the Mahabharat and Purans. This is my contention that the stories told in the ballads are never truth. The learned poets have removed the bitter truth or have utilised half truth in polished form

The above ballads of Rajasthan are true representatives of the heroic culture of Rajasthan. The traditions of braves and their wars, the social customs and beliefs are found in these ballads.

The ballads of Rajasthan are rich from the literary point of view also. 'Rasa' which is soul of the literary creation is found in its natural form here. The ornaments of the language, i.e., the proverbs etc, are in abundance.

We also find the form of religion, what religion means, how folk worships it, can only be studied through these ballads.

A chain of motifs is also available which can be compared and studied in the light of Aarne Thompson's motif index.

Thus the ballads of Rajasthan provide a vast scope of study and they are the true representatives of the true colours of *Folk-lore*.

*Dept. of Hindi, University of Udaipur, Rajasthan.*

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## A SURVEY OF HINDI-DIALECT DICTIONARIES

0.0 The purpose of this paper is to give an account and history of the work done so far on dialect dictionaries of Hindi area. The author does not aim at presenting the methodology of collection and analysis of data pertaining to dialect dictionaries. He would rather "expect a dictionary of a local dialect to give all the words that are current in non-standard speech with phonetic accuracy and with reasonable care in the definition of meanings".

0.1 In the Western countries the work on dialect dictionaries had begun in the last decades of 18th century. Walter William Skeat founded 'The English Dialect Society' whose aim 'was to collect words with divergent pronunciation, to record technical terms and proverbs and to transcribe specimens of dialect texts'. After that was published Joseph Wrighter's 'English Dialect Dictionary' in 1905. This dictionary contained 'the complete vocabulary of all dialect words in use or known to have been in use during the last two hundred years'.

0.2 But in India, the work on dialect dictionaries was started in the early thirties of 19th century. The history of Hindi dialect dictionaries, according to their period, may be classified as follows : -

A. The dialect dictionaries before 1885.

B. The dialect dictionaries between 1885 1950, and

C. The dialect dictionaries after 1950.

0.3 There is a vast difference of opinion among the scholars about the first Hindi dialect dictionary. One group is of opinion that 'Kutcherry Technicalities' edited by Mr. Carnegie is the first dialect dictionary. The author considered 'A Glossary of Indian Terms' of H. M. Elliot as the first dialect dictionary. But new researches throw light upon another 'Zillah dictionary' which is in the Roman character. The editor of this dictionary, Mr. Charles Phillip Brown explained in it the various words used in business in India. This remarkable work was published at Madras College Press in 1822. Thus 'Zillah dictionary' of C. P. Brown stood first in chronological order of Hindi-dialect dictionaries.

1.0 'A glossary of Indian Terms' of H.M. Elliot was meant for the use of various departments of the government of East India company. In 1842, a preliminary 'glossary of Indian Terms', prepared by H. W. Wilson with a blank column on each page for suggestions and additions, was circulated in India as a basis for a comprehensive official glossary.

The only important result of the circulation was a "supplement to the glossary of Indian Terms". This valuable work had been revised, re arranged and re-edited with additions. Agra, the City of Taj, had the honour of publishing it in the year 1815

1.1 Duncan Forbes edited 'A Dictionary of Hindustani Language' which was first published in 1818, its revised and enlarged second edition came out in 1866. The first part of 'Hindustani English Dictionary' contains 802 pages and the second part 'English Hindustani Dictionary' consists of 342 pages. The presentation is according to Persian character. The first part of this dictionary is based on the following dictionaries and books which may be mentioned here :

1. Hunter, Kilham Dictionary Hindoostanee and English. 2 Volumes, originally compiled by Joseph Taylor for private use Revised and prepared for press by W. Hunter.
2. Gilchrist, Dr. Hindoe Moral Preceptor, 8 Volumes.
3. Gladwin A Dictionary of Mohomedan Law and Bengal Revenue Terms, Calcutta 1797.
4. Elliot, H.M. Aglossary of Indian Terms, 8 volumes. Agra
5. Prof. Johnson, F. A Dictionary of Persian, Arabic and English
6. Adam, Dr. Hindi Dictionary, Calcutta 1829.
7. Lallu Lal Prem Sagar.
8. Thompson Hindi and English Dictionary, Calcutta 1846.
9. Herklots, Dr. Qanoon e Islam, 1824
10. Dukhnee Unwari Soheelee, 1832.
11. Wilson, H. H. A glossary of Judicial and Revenue terms and of useful words occuring in official documents, relating to the Administration of the Government of British India, 1842

The second part of Forbes 'A Dictionary of Hindustani Language' is based on Dr. Gilchrist's 'Dictionary, English and Hindoostanee' in two volumes which was first published in 1798 at Calcutta. Its second edition was out in 1819 from Edinburgh.

1.2 Another dictionary is of Patrick Carnegy's Kutcherry Technicalities or 'A glossary of Terms, Rural, official and general, in daily use in the courts of Law, and in illustration of the Tenures, Customs, Arts and Manufacturers of Hindustan'. It was first published in 1853 in Prellryterian Mission Press of Allahabad. Its Hindi version can be seen in Bharitya Sahitya (Volume No 2-3, July 1957). Carnegy mentioned the fact that he started collection of data in the year 1850. The order of its presentation was in Roman, Nagari and Persian character and explanations are given in English. Its revised and enlarged second edition was published in 1877.

1.3 In the year 1879, William Crooke published his 'A digest Rural and Agricultural terms' or 'Materials for a rural and agricultural glossary of the North-Western provinces and Oudh'. It is a collection of about 15 thousand words. This collection, before publication, was sent, for valuable suggestions and corrections, to the civil and educational officials. It deserves mention here because its first edition was arranged on the basis of subject but its revised edition was in alphabetical order. Another characteristic of this dictionary is that it is a collection of divergent pronunciation of terms. It should also be mentioned here that Crooke utilised the following dictionaries.

1. Elliot, H. M. -- A glossary of Indian Terms for the use of various departments of Government of East India Company, 1845.
2. Reeds, J. R. Azamgarh glossary, and
3. Wilson, H. H. - A glossary of Judicial and Revenue terms and of useful words occurring in official documents, relating to the administration of the Government of British-India, 1855.

1.4 With the publication of Crooke's dictionary, we get another 'A new Hindustani English Dictionary' with illustrations from Hindustani literature and Folklore by S. W. Fallen published in the same year. This dictionary is not much of linguistic significance since it deals with more folkloristics than of linguistics. Its importance lies in the fact that 'prominence is given to the spoken and rustic mother tongue of the Hindi speaking people of India, the exhibition, for the first time of the pure, unadulterated language of women and the illustrations given of the use of words by means of examples selected from the everyday speech of the people and from their poetry, songs and proverbs and other folklore'. The compiler has utilised the advantage of residence for many years in Delhi and Bihar, the two poles, so to speak of the Urdu and Hindi phrases of the languages which are together represented in the common term, Hindustani. He also resided at Mathura, the headquarters of the Braj dialect as well as at Agra, Kashi, Ayodhya, Bikaner, and 'Jodhpore'.

The first part of this dictionary consisting of the words nearest in the sense to the root meaning and the next group of words less closely allied to it than the first. No sketches are there in this dictionary.

1.5 We cannot omit mentioning here the importance of John T. Platt's 'A Dictionary of Urdu, classical Hindi and English'. Its first edition came out in 1884. The order of presentation is according to Persian alphabet.

1.6 The above discussion is the first phase of the development of Hindi-dialect dictionaries. This work had a greater importance as these contained technical terms which were prevailing in those days. This type of work contributed a lot in the courts and in government offices in their day-to-day proceedings. These collections of glossaries attracted

government officials as well as non-officials and consequently there came out a series of dialect dictionaries one after another in India and in West. Here, it may be mentioned that the credit for these works goes to the Westerners for their collection, analysis and publication.

The aim of these dictionaries was to collect the terms used in courts and in establishing contacts with Indian villages and culture. It is worth mentioning here that these dictionaries were neither prepared linguistically nor on the principles of lexicography. We largely agree with Dr. Grierson when he says 'Each writer copied his predecessor, according to his capacity, corrected a few mistakes or not, introduced a few more or not, and proclaimed a new gospel which was not new.'

2.0 In 1885, Dr. Grierson published his 'Bihar Peasant Life, a discursive catalogue of the surrounding of the people of that province'. This Peasant life initiated the second phase of the development of dialect-dictionaries. It might be possible that Dr. Grierson might have been inspired by Mr. Lal Bihari Dey's 'Govind Samanta' published in 1874, later its revised edition was called, 'Bengal Peasant Life' published in 1878.

"Bihar Peasant Life" is a collection of about 10 thousand terms, collected from the conversational speech of the people and noted on the spot where it was spoken either by writer himself or by his assistants. It was carefully compared with every available book of reference and where discrepancies occurred, they were either reconciled or explained. Finally, proof-sheets were circulated to all the Bihar districts and were again checked on the spot by competent observers different from the original persons who collected the materials on which the book was founded. This book, Dr. Grierson says, 'may claim to be entirely original, and to a certain degree accurate'.

There were two sources of collection of data. First, Dr. Grierson's own researches, secondly, Mr. Crooke's book 'A digest of Rural and Agricultural Terms', and all the books on which Mr. Crooke's book depended. The author does not claim originality in its general system and arrangement. This is modeled on Crooke's book. The terms have been explained with illustrations, sketches and photos.

'Bihar Peasant Life' is an important mile-stone in the field of dialect dictionaries whether they are of Hindi or other dialects. It is the main source of inspiration to the Indian linguists. The second phase of the history of Hindi-dialect dictionaries ceases with this valuable book.

3.0 It is regrettable that for about five decades of the 20th century, not a single dictionary came out, but with the inspiration of Dr. Dharendra Verma and on the foot steps of Dr. Grierson, Shri Harihar Prasad Gupta collected "Glossary of Rural Industries". Gupta's 'Gramodyog aur unki Shabdawali' (Glossary of Rural Industries) begins the third phase in the development of Hindi-dialect dictionaries.

It is an apt to mention here, that Gupta's work was meant for D.Phil. degree of Allahabad University. His is a limited field of work and brief in scope as well as in collection. His limited scope and brief collection of about 2500 terms, do interfere with his distinction of being the first Indian dialect lexicographer in Hindi area. Dr. Gupta's area was Pargana Ahiraula, Tahsil Phulpur and district Azamgarh. In the opinion of Dr. Gupta, the work of Dr. Grierson is not scientific and authentic because it covers a wide area of Bihar and is done not by a man but by many parties. Thus he selected a little area and collected the material personally with a view to make his work more scientific and authentic. The first portion of his work is arranged according to industries and the second portion is arranged alphabetically. Alphabetically arranged terms are explained with grammar, etymology and the numbers of paragraphs and sub-paragraphs are also given. But apart from all these characteristics, Dr. Gupta did not try to explain the terms with sketches and figures. Had Dr. Gupta used sketches and figures; his work would have become more valuable and important.

3.1 Mention may also be made here of a booklet 'Krishi Kosh' (Agricultural Glossary) of Shri Pyarelal Garg, containing 33 pages, published by Nagri Pracharni Sabha, Kashi. This is a mere collection of Agricultural glossary. It is not fruitful even for the people who are engaged in this field.

3.2 Uttar Pradesh. Hindusthani Academy published 'Awadhi Kosh' containing more than 15000 terms in 1955. The author, Shri Ramagya Dwivedi 'Samir', was inspired for this important work by his teacher Dr. R. L. Turner and his great work of distinction 'Nepali Dictionary'. The author personally started his work in the year 1931. The care has also been taken by the author about the phonetic variations available in Awadhi as well as in its sub-dialects. The terms are explained with grammar, etymology and supported by idioms, idiomatic phrases and proverbs. The illustrations from Jayasi and Tulsī, the main literary figures of Awadhi, are also given. The presentation of Awadhi Kosh is in alphabetic character. The figures and sketches do not exist in this valuable work.

3.3 In 1956, there came a 'Braj Bhasha Ki Krishak Jivan Sambandhi Shabdawali (Agricultural Glossary of Brajbhasha)' by Amba Prasad Suman. Dr. Suman worked with a view for his Ph.D. research. Two collections—one huge i.e., Dr. Grierson's 'Bihar Peasant Life' another brief i.e., Dr. H. P. Gupta's 'Glossary of Rural Industries'—were before him. Dr. Suman was inspired and collected about 14 thousand terms of Agriculture.

The field work for collection of data was made by Dr. Suman himself with a view to make his work more scientific and authentic. That

was why he collected nouns, verbs, indeclinables, proverbs and idioms. When he found any discrepancies, he discussed with the peasants on the spot in Aligarh district. Terms are generally explained with etymology and compared with other dialects. There are about 846 sketches and thirty nine figures used in both the volumes.

Dr. Suman hopes that his work will be helpful in Brajbhasha as a dialect and its literature. He is of the opinion that his scope of work is more wide and more accurate than that of Bihar Peasant Life.

3.4 The first part of the 'Krishi-Kosh' (Agriculture-Glossary) was published in the year 1959 with a long introduction containing techniques and methodology of collection, analysis and presentation. Dr. B. N. Prasad who was one of the senior most linguists of India edited this work. This is the only collection which is done with according to the principles of lexicography and with applications of principles of linguistics. The collection of data for this work was made by trained research assistants. Collection was made from the mouths of the people at the spots, the controversial points, if available, were discussed with the people concerned. The proof-sheets were also sent to the spots for the necessary corrections before their publication.

Its arrangement is in alphabetic order. The terms are explained nearest to its meaning, after that the place of its existence is also mentioned in abbreviated forms in the brackets. The standard forms of the terms are given and in case there is any slight phonetic variation, that has also been mentioned in it. If a word has more than one meaning, all the meanings are given in order of its nearest relation to the term. The terms are compared with other dialects and to make these terms more clear and accurate, sketches are also given. The synonyms and antonyms given therein are the main characteristics of this dictionary, which are not found in any other dictionaries.

This dictionary, linguistically, has more importance. It is more scientific, accurate and authentic. It is the light house in the ocean of the Hindi-dialect dictionaries.

3.4.1 Dr. Prasad not only edited the agriculture glossary but he also inspired his pupils to engage themselves in this direction. Devi Shankar Dwivedi worked on 'Glossary of Baiswari' under the supervision of Dr. B. N. Prasad. Another work 'Glossary of Garhwali' by Haridutt Bhatt was completed under the supervision of Dr. R. N. Sahai of K. M. Institute of Hindi Studies and Linguistics, Agra.

3.5 The study of 'Garhwali Ka Shabda Samarthya' (Glossary of Garhwali dialect) was made by Haridutt Bhatta in 1960. The data were collected by his own efforts for about three years. The presentation of the first part is according to subject and the second part is alphabetical. The etymology is also given for most of the terms. The terms are

analysed on the grammatical categories. But the author did not try to give the sketches and figures to make his work more valuable.

3.6 Dr. Dwivedi in his 'Baiswari Ka Shabda Samarthya' (Glossary of Baiswari dialect) has adopted the same principles as have been established by Mr. Bhatta. The author has tried his best to give etymologies of most of the terms but it lacks in the sketches and figures. The author has also worked on grammatical categories of the glossary. We do not find any difference in the presentation of the works by Mr. Bhatta and Mr. Dwivedi.

3.7 Another work limited in area and matter by Shri Saligram Sharma is 'Allahabad Zile Ki Krishi Sambandhi Sabdawali' (Agriculture glossary of Allahabad district). The first portion of the work gives the details of meanings arranged on the subject, the second part is arranged alphabetically. The author claims the authenticity of etymologies for more than 50% of the terms. Dr. Sharma personally collected the material with an aim to make his work more accurate and scientific. He had the opportunity to discuss the doubtful terms, if available, on the spot.

3.8 After this work, there comes 'A glossary of Kumayun dialect' done by Ram Singh. Mr. Singh travelled, from one place to another in Almorah, Nainital and Pithoragarh districts, for the collection of data. The recording of the divergent phonetic differences, is the only main feature of this work. Etymologies of the terms, sketches and figures are not given.

3.9 Another research work 'Hariyana Ko Sanskritik Sabdawali' (Cultural Glossary of Hariyana) has been done by Vishnu Dutta Bhardwaj. This work is meant for Ph.D. research and done under the supervision of Dr. R. N. Sahai of K. M. Institute, Agra. The author of this work, Mr. Bhardwaj personally collected the material, and, in an interview told the author of this paper that all the problems relating to the glossary were discussed at the spots with the people concerned, with a view to make this work more authentic and scientific. The presentation of this work is according to subject. The terms are explained in details and their etymologies are also given at the same time. The second half of the work is arranged alphabetically. The number of paras and sub paras are also given. Had Bhardwaj given the sketches and figures, his work would have become more valuable.

3.10 In 1966, we get another work of Shri Kanti Kumar on 'Chhattisgarhi Ki Gramya Jiwan Shabdawali' (Rural glossary of Chhattisgarhi). Its scop is limited upto Surguja district only. This work is divided into two major parts and twenty one chapters with an appendix. The first part consists of an introduction of Chhattisgarh and Chhattisgarhi. The second part deals with 21 Chapters based on Rural industrial glossary of Chhattisgarhi. To make his work more accurate and scientific,



the author discussed the discrepancies, if available, with the peasants as well as other people engaged in the various industries at the spots and removed them. We find even a slight phonetic variation of the terms in this work. The terms are explained on descriptive level with illustrations from idioms, idiomatic phrases and proverbs of local dialects as well as other dialects. The author has also given 16 figures and 151 sketches, to make the terms more understandable.

3.11 Rajasthani Audyogik Shabadawali (Industrial glossary of Rajasthani) covers Mewar area of Rajasthan. The author, Mr. Brij Mohan Jawalia made personal attempts for the collection of material. The author paid more attention about the divergent pronunciation, if found, and discrepancies were also removed at the original spots. The main characteristic of this, lies in the fact that its terms are explained with grammar, etymologies, figures and sketches. The author, in the first part, deals with Industrial glossary and the second part consists of terms arranged in alphabetic order with etymologies.

4.0 The aforesaid works are the major works of great importance. But apart from all these major efforts, we get minor efforts too. The minor works cannot be excluded from this discussion. As we get in 'Mrinayani' the famous novel of Dr. Vrindavan Lal Verma, the terms of Bundeli dialect are explained in the end. It was made on the advice of Late Dr. V. S. Agrawal. The main aim of it was to make his novel more understandable. In the same way, Dr. K. C. Agrawal and Dr. R. P. Agrawal have also given a little glossary in their works 'Descriptive Analysis of Shekhawati dialect' and 'Linguistic analysis of Bundeli dialect' respectively.

4.1 The major and minor works, if we critically examine, may be classified clearly under two main heads. These works are meant for the purpose of research degree only and independent works. Independent works are very little and may be counted on fingers end. Dr. Prasad's 'Agriculture-glossary' and Dr. Grierson's 'Bihar Peasant Life' deserve mention here as independent works.

4.2 The work of dialect dictionaries is not an easy job. It requires a lot of time, hard work and money. Apart from all these, the person or the party engaged in this type of work, needs confidence and patience. But it is a highly gratifying that people are being drawn to this direction. The result of this attraction is that a number of research scholars are engaged in this field. T. R. Sharma's work, 'The glossary of Rural Industries of muzaffar Nagar', A. C. Gaur's work 'Agriculture-glossary of Tahsil Bhaswat (Meerut district)', N. C. Rai's work on 'Agricultural glossary of Bhijpuri (based on Gazipur district)' and H. G. Singh's work 'Agriculture-glossary of Bundeli', all are under preparation.

*Central Hindi Institute, Agra (India)*

## REVIEWS OF BOOKS

BANGLAR LOKA SAHITYA O-SANSKRITI (In Bengali, Folk Literature and Culture of Bengal) by Dulal Chaudhury, Lokayata Prakasan, Calcutta, 1376 B. S. Demy, 185. Pages. Rs. 6/-

The book under review contains seven chapters with three appendices. The chapters are—*Folklore o-Bharatiya Protisabda* (Folklore and Indian Synonyms), *Lokayaner Swarup* (Nature of Folklore) *Chharai Banglar Samaj-o-itihash* (Society and history as depicted in doggerel) *Banglar Loka Sahitye Nari* (Women in folk literature of Bengal), *Loka Sahitye Samaj Jijnsa* (Social awareness in folk literature), *Banglar Loka Silpa: Mukhosh* (Mukhosh—a typical folk art of Bengal) and *Loka Sahitya-o-Rabindranath* (Folk literature and Rabindranath Tagore) and in the appendices *Loka, Sahitya Sanskriti Sangya-o-Bibhajan*, *Bangla Charar Chanda* and *Paribhasha*.

The essays gathered here are all of interest and importance, but it is not easy to detect the underlying theme on which to base judgment. Written for the Post Graduate students for the special paper on folk literature than for intelligent readers or specialists, book is intended, as the author says in his preface, as an aid to such students who have taken folk literature as special paper in their studies at the University of Calcutta and Rabindra Bharati. It has been the work to demonstrate regional folk literature, the scientific study of which can fulfil a much-needed cultural function. Around this theme the essays move. The range covered, the authorities cited, and described is of interest only to workers in that field.

Dr. B. N. Shastri

THE EAST INDIA COMPANY AND THE ECONOMY OF BENGAL (from 1704 to 1740)  
by S. Bhattacharya, Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay, Calcutta, 2nd edn. 1969.  
232 pages, Price not mentioned

This is an example of the type book which, while a blessing to the readers, is a bane to the reviewer. And where the author is Dr. Sukumar Bhattacharya the problem deepens. The seven chapters with seven appendices are all of interest and importance in tracing the course of events in Bengal—from the period under study, especially to the developments consequent on the activities of the East India Company. The author says in his preface to the first edition, "From the materials at my disposal I have tried to give an account of the work of economy of Bengal in this transitional period, the relation of the Government with the European trading settlements, the operation of the mints and currency, the conditions of trade and of the different classes of the people in Bengal". He

has established with data the changes and developments that led to Plassey in 1757 and which is the beginning of about 200 years British rule in India. Inspired by the realization of a work of the type under review, the author has zealously prepared the history of the period that caters to the probing mind of the scholar and the factual mind of the student.

It is a successful attempt at satisfying a great need of the day. Even though it was necessary to review the book thoroughly in the light of modern researches before present edition comes out again and the publishers, Mr. K. L. Mukhopadhyay, is conscious to that. So he has given a short note which says that "It is with deep sorrow that we have to state that the author of this excellent research monograph suddenly died when we were halfway through the publication. Apart from consequent delays, we were without his help and guidance in the second half of the book".

C. R. Sen

STUDIES IN TAMIL FOLK LITERATURE, by N. Vanamamalai, New Century Book House Pvt. Ltd., Madras, 1969 XXIII+152 P. Price Rs. 5/-

This is a collection of papers read in the International Conference and Seminar of Tamil Studies I and II and an 'eminently scholarly work which is bound to prove very useful not only because of the interest on the subject (in a very readable presentation of it) but also because the work is replete with well-documented information of all sorts connected with the Indian folk literature and folklore', says Dr. Sunitikumar Chatterjee in his foreword. The book has the following contents :

- I. Folk motif in the Silappadikaram.
- II. A Study of the Historical ballads of Tamilnad
- III. Consolidation of Feudalism and anti feudal struggles during Chola Imperialist rule
- IV. Social themes in Tamil folk ballads
- V. Women in Tamil Folklore.

The first four articles were read to literature and social sciences sections of the 1st and 2nd conference and seminars of the International Association of Tamil Research and the fifth one was written for 'Folklore' at the suggestion of its editor. Besides the above essays, the book also has a scholarly foreword by Dr. S. K. Chatterjee and an introduction by Sankar Sen Gupta. The greatest charm of this study, said the introducer is that the materials which enrich the study still live in the hearts and minds of Tamilians. It is an attempt to reach the mind and heart of unsophisticated people of Tamilnad by their own material which is penetrating and exact. The book is not dry-as-dust guide-book. It is potent with human document.

Samir Ghosal

March, 1970

## EDITORIAL

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The world lives in ideas. Since our art, literature, music, philosophy, religion etc. are the systematized bodies of our ideals and bodies, they are all mental entities. Buildings, libraries museums, laboratories etc. do not constitute our institutions they are but the outer garbs. The soul of a university resides in our minds. If by some mysterious catastrophy all material objects—books, libraries, museums, laboratories, and so on perish, man will soon be able to reconstruct them : for guiding spirit of all these reside in the social mind of man.

The happiness of man depends, to a great extent, upon the nature of the society in which he lives. The better the condition of human society the better are the chances of man to become happy. Profound thinkers all through the ages, who were anxious to make man happy in life, were definitely conscious of these ideas. A good many of them framed imaginary conditions for the creation of ideal human societies, which on analysis were found to be stereotyped like insect and animal societies of Nature.

Life in utopian societies would surely be monotonous, uninteresting, and gloomy; it can never make man happy. If man wants to plan an ideal society, he must plan for such conditions in this society as can bring about diversities with the development of inclinations and scope for adventurous and creative activities in his life. Man can become great in life only through his creativeness and happiness. It is this happiness which will encourage creative minds of the community to take their natural leads in the field of progress, in science of sociology and folklore. It has been visualized by some that man in the long run will take to thoughts for determining better ways and methods for human welfare and happiness that will fill the life of man of the future. In doing so, every man will have to take part to reconstruct the country through oral traditional materials along with other things. It is an art. To run the machinery of a State methodologically and scientifically is also an art. There are mechanical aspects for this nodoubt but there are also aspects which require knowledge, feeling, tact, and wisdom. The most important factor, however, is the art of utilising all these for the administration of the State and for us the regular publication of this journal. We are fully aware of our responsibilities and our role in the folklore movement. For serving the cause better we solicit active support and co-operation of our readers, well-wishes contributors and advertisers. We request to the subscribers, who have not yet paid their subscriptions, kindly to expedite their payments and readers and well-wishers to help us with as much advertisements as possible. Without full-fledged help and co-operation of everybody it is getting difficult to go on with the journal by coping with the cost of production of the journal in these high days of economic crisis.



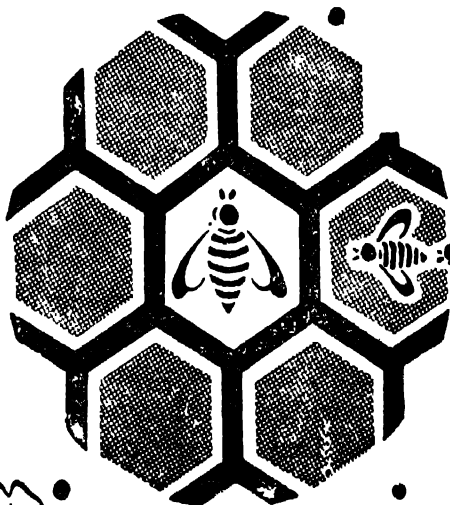
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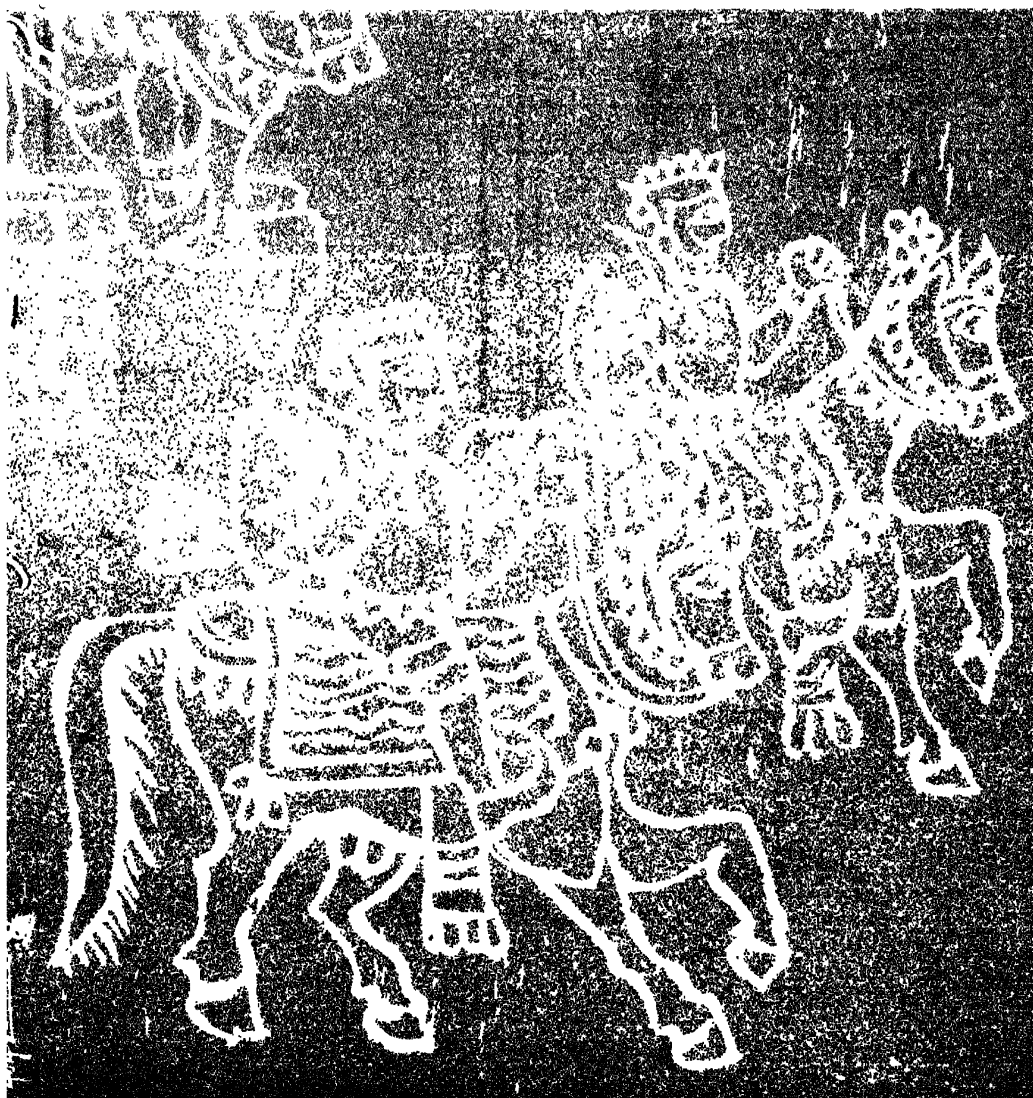
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# FOLKLORE vi

VOLUME XI NUMBER 3

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S. K. AHUJA

## THE LEGEND THAT WAS SATI

The mention of the word "SATI" spurs the imagination to envision the picture of a woman of utter virtue and self abnegation who voluntarily consigned herself to the flames on her husband's pyre. Literally, the word denotes a variegated combination of purity, truth, and faith. In its hey day, consummation of the rite of widow burning was believed to confer inestimable beneficence not only on the prime incumbent of the munistration, which, inter alia, assured her abode in heaven along with her husband for as many years as hair on human body—nearly three and half crores—but also on the three races with whom her earthly existence was linked, i.e. those of her mother, father and husband, besides peripheral benefits that the priests and the general public obtained by accompanying the procession and witnessing the ceremony and by occasionally receiving departing floral gifts from the Sati.

Most ancient societies the world over were, at one time or the other, swayed by the custom of widow burning, or more rarely, burying, but after reaching certain point of zenith it seems to have faded out into total disuse through an organised social effort or a happy conjunction of natural forces. One possible reason for its early discontinuance in those societies could be the complete absence of religious sanction behind the convention which denied its opportunity and expediency of entrenchment. The custom was observed in one form or another by Chinese, Greeks, Egyptians, Slavs, Scandinavians, Germans, Teutons, Gauls and Hermites and of course, the Indians. In fact it could be said that at varying periods of time the entire human race was shadowed by the rite. In certain cases only funeral offerings were made which included generous gifts of slaves who were slaughtered without the slightest compunction. Royal mummies of Egypt were entombed in the company of numerous slaves for rendering assistance in the after-death life.

In India, the custom could be traced back to the dawn of history. Proponents of the thesis that the custom flourished in the Vedic ages are numerous but their interpretation of the scriptural passages of questionable authenticities is not free from doubt. It is commonly known that Rig Veda treats of pleasures of life and a diametrically opposite picture of the grim and dolorous rite could not be co-existent therewith and is therefore very unsupportable in that context. It may be that in keeping with the medieval and dark forces of the earth, India could not be an exception to the observances of a social custom which was followed in many other lands. Some authorities expound that Scythians were the original race who gave birth to the idea, nurtured it and propagated the same in the lands they inhabited. A conjecture is safely offered that the concept germinated in India with the Scythians. However, the rite is said to have formed not an unimportant part in the funeral ceremonies about four centuries before the Ramayana and the Mahabharata or about 300 years B. C. In certain texts, eight centuries before Christ traces of references to Sati are to be found.

In the Rig Veda and Atharva Veda, rites of the Antyesti Samskara (the last ceremonies) are delineated where reference to the laying of the widow on the funeral pyre is available. No trace of concremation is found in these texts. The purpose of laying the widow along with her deceased husband is cloaked in indissoluble mystery. A guess may be ventured here. Since it is believed that the spirit of the departed person hovers around the dead body for sometime after the person is commonly believed dead, an ingenuous system was devised by the bigoted and gullible priesthood of eliciting permission from the dead person for allowing the widow to abide in the world and relinquish wealth to the descendants. An address to this effect was made to the dead man while the widow lay alongside the corpse, whereafter a younger brother or any other suitable person held her by the left hand urging her to rise and relinquish the world of the dead and, in many cases, further asking her to agree to be the wife of the one who was willing to marry her. (In a considerable number of cases the willing person happened to be the younger brother of the dead man or a near relative).

The description is suggestive. It is possible that in certain cases the widows may have refused to relinquish the side of their dead husbands. Their living relationship may have been intensely emotional and the woman may have been bowed down by excessive grief on the loss of her Lord, the visible God without whom life may have no meaning for her or in whose absence continuance of existence just could not be contemplated. A further conjecture is that in one of the symptomatic or pioneering instances, the woman may have been compelled to accompany her partner to doom by the vested interests of her domestic life, parti-

cularly those who coveted the considerable wealth that the deceased may have left behind. Or perhaps the burden of maintenance of the widow may have impelled a heartless partriarch to enter into collusion with the priesthood for an easy elimination of the widow, injecting the mundane suggestion with religious respectability and piousness, holding out, at the same time, a promise of great ethreal splendour in the after-life. No religious sanction ever seems to have been attached to the custom. It is only the perversion of the rooted and vested bechoot of the medieval mind that twisted the scriptural stipulations to interpretation congenial to its own end. Manu, the Law Giver, does not enjoin the practice, nor for that matter is it supported by later faiths in the strands of Indian social and religious life. Manu's directions to the widow is for leading a life of an aescetic after the departure of her Lord. Provisions in innumerable ancient texts that a law contrary in spirit to that enjoined by Manu is not commendable must be taken clear note of. Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism expostulated against the practice of Sati.

It is, therefore, apparent that no single factor or consideration can be held responsible for transfixation of the practice in India, though due primarily to local influences its predominance in certain parts of the country can be explained, even as its sparse acceptance in others can be accounted for.

Possibly, the Aryans - among them principally the aristocracy - may have followed the rite for over a thousand years, yet the earliest recorded instance of Sati is provided in the account left to posterity by a Greek historian, Diodorus Siculus who may be approximated to have lived in Julius Caesar's time. The event described is the death and funeral of a Hindu General named Keteus serving under Eumenes the Greek Commander of Alexander's army. While fighting Antigenos somewhere in 316 or 317 B. C. the Indian General was killed and an obstreperous controversy raged between his two wives who vied for the honour of cremation. The issue in deference to the accepted convention then prevalent, was settled in favour of the younger spouse as the elder was big with a child. Bedecked as bride, she laid herself by the side of her husband on the pyre. A detachment of the army marched three times around the pyre platform. The violence of flames could not draw a cry of anguish from the voluntary participant, she is reported to have bid adieu with a smile, perhaps with a wave of arm even as the flames completely engulfed her.

Certain positive conclusions can be deduced from the above account, which could conveniently be taken as a typical one of the many that preceded or followed. In the first place, the custom appears to have been confined to either the martial race of Kshatriyas entrusted with the defence of the country, or the aristocracy for some ambiguous reasons.

Second, to achieve the state of Satihood was deemed as an honour which unequivocally proves that no force was used or required in its administration and that the custom was entirely voluntarily followed, being based on unstinting willingness. Third, social forces seem to have assigned full approbation to the rite. However, no explicit legal or religious sanction seemed attached to the fashion. Successive cases of Sati appear to have created so marked an impression of selflessness, grit, valour and chivalry, loftiness of purpose and sublimity of action that the once languishing custom leaped into a raging fashion embraced by all castes and creeds. It no longer remained the monopoly of the Brahmins, the aristocracy or the militant sections of the Indian society.

Brahmanic literature, the various Sutras, Srutis, the Buddhist and Jain sacred books do not either support or repudiate the rite. In fact, no clear mention of the existence of the custom is available.

A marked reference confronts us in the Samhitas of Vishnu and Vyasa which stipulate that either the widow should lead a chaste life of celibacy, renouncing all pleasures of the senses or as an alternative ascend her husband's funeral pyre. It is indeed noteworthy that even here no clear commandment in favour of the custom is propounded.

The Mahabharata cites prominent instances of the rite but it is known that most of the widows of the martyrs of the Epic War did not immolate themselves, though some drowned themselves later. It is stated that on hearing of the death of her husband, Dronacharya, Krpi made her appearance on the battle field of Kurukshetra in wild dishevelled fashion, but she did not achieve Satihood. Some stray examples of Sati are also to be found in the epic of the Ramayana.

The rite may be assumed to have figured in the Indian literature in the centuries following the birth of Christ. Kolhan's Rajatarangini and Somedeva's Kathasaritsagara mention instance of Sati; in particular, these two cardinal publications inform us of the variation that the principle of Sati came to adopt in course of time. This may well have been influenced by Scythian practice of a similar nature. Kolhan quotes instances where concubines, sisters and even mothers coneremated themselves, known as *Sahamarana* or *Sahagamana* or *Anvarohana*. Somedeva quotes the particular example of the Queen Mother committing Sati when her son Visujitamalla of Nepal was killed in Samvat 878.

## II

Jena Tavernier, the famous French traveller, who made a number of trips to India, clearly portrays the custom in his reminiscences which relate to a period between 1640 and 1667 A. D. He states that the alternative to Sati open to the widow was to lead a life of unbroken misery, dis-

grace and contempt-- an existence of a worth lesser than even a slave. Most often the balance of choice tilted in favour of the custom, the decision is no small measures being dictated by the overzealous relations and priests who did not tarry in portraying the picture of glory and defecation that awaited the deceased and the widow in the other world. The woman who had decided to go the way had her husband shaved and ornaments such as arms and leg bracelets, which were presented by her husband symbolising her faithfulness, were taken away. Though during the period under reference the Muslim rulers had, in a half hearted fashion, forbidden the rite as their permission to commission it was mandatory, such permission appears to have been freely granted in consideration of a sizeable bribe offered to the Muslim governors. Other ingredients, such as bedecking the lady as a bride, playing of music, distribution of relics by the would be Sati and the possible administration of drugs, narcotics and potions to induce insensibility were common to this period as in the immemorial past.

Principally three different methods seem to have been employed in the various parts of the country in the consummation of the actual ceremony. In the entire region of Coromandal, the method adopted was to dig a large and deep hole in the ground, stuffed with generous quantities of firewood. The body of the husband was placed at the edge, the wife went round the pit three times, chewing betel nonstop, bidding adieu to the near ones, whereafter the body was thrown into the inferno heated like a furnace. The woman with her back towards the pit was pushed in by one of the priests and combustibles and oils were poured in liberal quantities by the relatives, the operation being accompanied by deafening beating of drums and cymbals. In certain places, mostly near the sandy shores instances of burrying the dead and the living have been recorded. The woman was placed upright with the husband in her lap in a deep hole and each relation poured a bucketful of the earth and sand until the hole was covered a level with the ground or a foot or two above ground level. The relations then jumped there at to ensure that the Sati was smothered.

In the kingdom of Bengal, it was obligatory to perform the ceremony on the banks of the sacred Ganga where the dead and the alive were washed and offered to *agni* in eternal union. Tavernier states that due to shortage of firewood in the Bengal region the bodies were often half-burnt in the scanty bed of reeds and wood and were thrown into the Ganges to be eagerly devoured by the waiting crocodiles.

In the kingdom of Gujarat extending upto Agra and Delhi, the system was to build a hut of faggots and the woman placed in the middle, half reclining against a strong post with which she was fastely secured from the waist, the husband lying across her knees. From outside the

hut, fire was kindled by the priests and relatives who poured ghee and combustibles thereon to increase the intensity and violence of the flames. Melted gold and copper ornaments were seized by the priests as their rightful reward for abetting the rite.

The enlightened minds saw the evil in the practice of sending the innocent women to their dooms and each great man who supported its abolition expressed forcefully the need for its total prohibition and took practical steps in this direction. *Mahanirvana Tantra* condemned the practice in no ambiguous terms and stated that those who perpetrated the crime of burning the woman with her husband earn for themselves only a place in eternal hell. The practice is likened to the act of performance of black magic in *Medhatithi* on Manu. Annamarama, the pathetic act of dying with any article left by the husband, e.g. padookas, loin cloth, turban etc., which is nothing short of suicide, is deemed to be an act of irreligion against the spirit of the Sastras. Vedas have laid down the cardinal principal of completing one's span of life on earth which should not be shortened by voluntary or deliberate act, however socially justified such an exercise might be. Bana Bhatta was one of the earliest advocates who took an unequivocal stand for the obliteration of the rite. Bana has gone a step further in branding the perpetrators of the custom as ignorant, short-sighted lot. He has brought out a new angle, in that he calls it suicide by the widows committed purely to obviate the unendurable grief sustained by them, thus tearing apart the weakness which may in many cases have been responsible in sending the simple minded young widows to their dooms. Successive Muslim rulers, including Akbar, Jehangir and Aurangzeb issued *formans* forbidding the commission of this practice. Akbar is reputed to have personally intervened in saving the life of a young Rajputance who was reluctant to be sacrificed for the honour of Satihood. Although the Sikh Gurus enjoined disassociation from the rite, notable instances of Sati performed during and after Ranjit Singh's times by Sikhs are available. The Adigranth says 'Satis are those who live on with a broken heart'.

One of the rare instances of Sati amongst Muslims is mentioned in *Tuzuk-i-Jehangiri*. Rajaur (a town near Kashmir) was a Hindu dominated area before their proselytisation to Islam was carried out. As a vestige of their culture, these converts continued to practice the rite as of old, except that they buried their dead along with the living in contrast to burning them. A case of 10 to 12 years old girl is cited who was buried along with her husband of the same age. Royal decree prohibiting the practice on pain of death was issued by Jehangir after this occurrence. This decree, to all accounts, seemed intended for Muslim populace.

The half-hearted measures adopted by the ruling authorities in sup

pression of the rite bore no appreciable results, as the Muslim governors from whom prior permission was to be obtained, were too ready to acquiesce for a consideration which was gladly offered. The social reformer, who went all out for its erosion was largely unsuccessful for lack of enforcing capability. It was, therefore, essential that a fusion of both these pre-requisites was available to eradicate the evil.

The great apostle of abolition of this searing and blotchful custom, that great man from Bengal- the land that gave birth to many an illustrious sons of India- Raja Ram Mohan Roy, was shaken violently after witnessing the spectacle of the performance of Sati of his brother Jagan Mohan's wife somewhere in 1811. She was an unwilling and most reluctant participant in this drama and when the flames engulfed her she made an unfruitful attempt to escape. The precipitators and the so called protectors of the mythical values administering the show took adequate measure in setting her valiant bid at naught. The priests and other relatives pinned her down to the pyre by means of green bamboos and the high level intensity of drums and other musical instruments drowned her shrieks. This inhumane sacrifice set Ram Mohan Roy thinking. His resolve for the reform gained added strength from the miserable position then prevalent with regard to the ever increasing number of women committing, or forced to commit, Sati. In one year, 1815, as many as 840 Satis were committed in Bengal. The position remained unchanged during the following two years when the number of Satis were nearly 1400, though the number decreased somewhat subsequently. No absolute reliance could be placed on these figures as to their correctness because no official machinery existed to record the events and Satis performed in the rural areas were barely noticed.

In 1818 and 1820 Raja Ram Mohan Roy published two tracts on the practice of Sati after delving deep into the religious aspects of the custom. His findings which laid bare the complete absence of any religious sanction behind the practice confounded the supporters of the rite. It was perhaps the first real attempt to put before the intelligentsia the fallacious and mythical beliefs governing the observance of the rite and doubtless the gravity of the thoughtless and blind following jolted the people severely. The then Governor General William Cavendish Bentinck had initiated the move, to legally curb the entrenched practice. The humanistic minded English Governor held consultations with Raja Ram Mohan Roy and was convinced that bereft of the support from social forces the custom could be forcefully tackled under legal stipulations. The masterly minutes recorded by Bentinck recommending the passage of the statute is an archieve of lasting significance in the history of social reform in India. Fourth of December 1829 is in real terms a day to be hailed for it was on this day that Lord Bentinck



carried the regulation in Council by virtue of which all those who abetted the rite of Sati were declared guilty of culpable homicide. For this stupendous achievement he earned Macaulay's encomium "as the man who abolished cruel rites, gave liberty to the expression of public opinion, whose constant study was to elevate the intellectual and moral character of the nations committed to his charge". (The inscription appears below Bentinck's statue at Calcutta).

By any test, any socially evil custom-practised by a people from time immemorial cannot be expected to cease overnight, even in the face of heavy penalties stipulated for its violation. Numerous defiances of the law were committed and the guilty punished accordingly. A large measure of success was achieved within a few years of the passage of the statute, although religious bigots appealed to the Privy Council against the law. Raja Ram Mohan Roy went to England as a supporter of the law. The appeal was ultimately rejected.

The members of the suppressed leanings found vent from time to time and the historian is confronted with a number of cases where a revival of the practice was sought to be introduced. As recently as in 1954 and even in 1961, the now rare occurrence in the field was witness. In the former case, a Rajput girl achieved Satihood in a village in Jhansi District, another one in the same year having been committed by the wife of Brigadier Zabar Singh. On November 9, 1961 another Sati came to light. A village woman immolated herself on her husband's pyre at a place known as Mitawa in Nagpur District. Nearly six to seven thousand people are reported to have witnessed the rite.

Eulogies have not been lacking in support of the selfless acts of the Satis. Hutton goes out to praise the matchless constancy and fearless indifference of death of the Indian widows. Rabindra Nath Tagore has warmly lauded the utter coldness with which the widows beautified and sanctified the death. John Dryden sang of the sterling virtue of the widows thus :

" . . . a funeral vow  
Which cruel laws to Indian widows allow  
When fatally their virtue they approve  
Cheerful in flames and Martyrs of their love."

As a measure of expression of devotion to the husband, the widows act of Satiism is the supreme culmination of her feelings. The ideals of unquestioned loyalty and love of the Hindu woman have no equal anywhere on earth. What greater proof of the fidelity of Indian wife is needed than the fact that she voluntarily sacrificed herself ? Even after the rite had been banned by law, the law-enforcers were them-

selves compelled to permit its commission in one of the rare examples of human experiences graphically recorded by Major General Sleeman in his *Rambles and Recollections*. The Englishman was fully convinced, through the behaviour and discourse of the lady who had been prevented to immolate herself, that her salvation lay only with her husband who had been cremated earlier. This was the zenith of the ideals of the Indian womanhood which, with the passage of time and like everything else around us had changed (somewhat). The landscape of the Indian countryside is draped with numerous mute monuments that bear eloquent testimony to the highest ideals embodied in the character of the Indian woman

*Railway Board, New Delhi.*

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# The Indian Theogony

*A Comparative Study of Indian Mythology from the Vedas to the Puranas*

SUKUMARI BHATTACHARJI

An account of the development of the great triad of Indian mythology : Brahma, the Creator, Visnu, the Preserver and Siva, the Destroyer. Dr. Bhattacharji shows how the gods changed with the passing of time and how some disappeared in the process. She makes extensive comparisons with the myths of many other peoples, particularly Indo-European.

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## BUDHA—A SIRMUR FOLK DANCE

*Budha* is an interesting dance from Rainka tehsil. This owes its origin to the bygone days when the higher castes used to dominate the low castes, their tenants, in this part of the hills. In this dance at the time of Diwali festival, Thakurs and Rajputs send their greetings to their relatives in another village through the dancing party consisting of Harijans. The dancers also get a dance to wish a Happy Diwali to their relatives and friends while their arrival is eagerly awaited in the village.

The tenants used to please their landlords in many ways. One of them was by performing *Budha* dance in their honour. This dance has become a part of their cultural life for the last so many decades and is continuing even now, though the times has changed. It is performed during Rainka fair which is held about ten days after Diwali. On various cultural meets at State and at the National level, this dance has been performed and is highly acclaimed.

*Budha* dance is held on *teej* and *chaath* following Diwali festival in the month of Kartika (Oct-Nov.) It may, however, be prolonged for a day or so. The minimum number of men taking part in the dance is ten while the maximum may be fifty. The entire party is divided into two groups, one performs the dance and the other plays the music. Songs are sung in chorus by both.

The men in the dancing party wear a special type of a dress. The other party wears the usual clothes. The special dress consists of *pagree*—a white turban, *kurta*—a shirt, *pyjama*—(a pair of breeches) which is tight at the ankles and a *cholna*—a white gown extending upto the knee having fine embroidery work with coloured threads done at the back and on the sides. Round the waist a *kamar daval* is wrapped. This is a big coloured piece of cloth.

The members of the dancing party wear ornaments mostly borrowed from their landlords. These are *dharaitoo* and *baley*—earrings having coloured stones, *har*—a heavy silver necklace, *kandi*—a small silver necklace worn quite close to the neck and *battey* heavy and thick silver bracelets.

The orchestra consists of *haluk*—a longish type or small drum, *Damanu*—a small *nagara*, *chhunku*—a brass plate, *banshi*—a flute and *dhak*—a small type of *haluk*.

On the appointed day, Kohis from each household collect in the open

compound of the village temple. They carry their musical instruments. The special dress is, however, not put on at this stage. A prayer known as *sewa* is first sung before the village deity. After this they break into two or three groups and go to the houses of their landlords. They sing songs in their praise. This too is known as *sewa*. After singing for about two hours, they seek permission for a break. The landlord then asks them to visit the particular village where he has given married to his own daughter or sister. The dancing party then begins its journey to that village, and reach there before dawn.

Before entering the village boundary, music is played. First, they call at the village deity and after singing the *sewa*, they move towards the particular house as directed by their landlord. Here they sing *sewa* in honour of the family for one hour and then retire for a short rest.

After a brief pause, the *budha* dance begins. The leader of the party directs others to put on the dress and jewellery as described above. They dance to the tune of the music. The dance is held in a circle which goes on moving slowly. They wave a handkerchief or a *clangra* from time to time. The steps are not subject to any rules. The tempo of the dance goes on increasing slowly with the music. The dance continues till in the evening. After interval, they go to the village deity and again sing *sewa*.

The family serves the party with delicious food like rice, *potanua*, ghee and jaggery. The party distributes parched grain or *muda*, to the married daughters of the village. In return they receive double the *muda* and grains. The landlord gives them one rupee each. At night, they sing and visit other houses.

Next morning, the party returns to their village. On their way back, they first visit their village deity and sing *sewa*. Then they go to the landlord's house and sing songs. He receives *muda* and walnuts from the hands of the members of the dancing party. In return, Thakurs serve them with good dishes and give them one rupee each. Thus the *budha* dance comes to an end. The *sewa* and other folk songs sung during the dance are given here. Of late, light film songs have made their way into this dance.

The following *Sewa* is sung in honour of the village deity :

ऐथे केमरा थानो  
ऐथे देवरा थानो  
देवे पूजु ला कुणो  
भाटे बामण पुजे



भाटे बमणा रा केओ रा जाये  
 भाटे बामण दा राजा सोये  
 रात गये रैणा व्याये  
 रेणा व्याये के भाटे रोआ जगत होये  
 तेड़ा रोये भाटे घोते लाये  
 भाटे रोआ बामणा पनायरे दा जाये

*Gist* :—This is a song sung in praise of Thakur, when Harijans visit the house of their landlords. The song is in the form of questions and answers. Whose house is it ? This is Thakur's house. Where is Thakur ? He is fast asleep. All elders and children are also sleeping. Who will wake them up ? His wife would wake them up. Who will kill the lice in his beard ? His wife will do the job. She will also apply the mustard oil to his beard and comb it. In the closing lines, they sing that they have sung enough in praise of Thakur's family and house.

Following is another song which is tuned with dance :

नरगु भगत वुआडा चाले  
 सीते चाला जयालो  
 खोश चला मीलावड़े  
 साइवु गोपालु  
 सयाणा चला मरताना  
 सायजो दा पेजु  
 जनीआ और मोंकु चले गनोगे दे  
 रजाने रा बानु  
 साया चला जणा  
 जामा चला जमाड़  
 छरता चला जड़ेनदा  
 मुगड़ीया चला नमाड़  
 वेदमा चला नारा सेऊ  
 जगता चला मुणा कुवाणा  
 खोड़ी चला दराबेल

वड़गा दाणा  
 माठ चला गठुवाड़  
 मड़ोली दा काणा  
 चोबु चला जब डोगी  
 ठीकरा दा माडु  
 रवागा चला अनराड़  
 कड़से मराडु  
 भाटे ले आ बामणा नावणा ले करे  
 भाटे ले बामणा ले कुजा दा पाणी भोगी  
 भाटे रा बामणा देवटी दा आये  
 देवटी मान्दो लीऊ लेओ  
 देवते २ पूजनो लाये

*Gist* :—This also is in questions and answers form. Whose place is this? It is *devata's* place. Who worships the deity? Brahman worships it. Where is he? He is sleeping. Is it about to dawn? Yes, Brahman has got up. Has he put on the clothes? Yes, he is going to spring to take bath. He has also filled the jug with fresh water. Now he enters the temple and worships the *devta* with incense.

Following is another song in praise of Thakur :

ऐथे थी केसरो थानो  
 ऐथे रा ठाकरा रा थानो ।  
 ठाकरों केई राये जाये,  
 ठाकरो राहे पलो सुती ।  
 सुते बाड़ीये वोड़े,  
 सूते दाड़ीये भोड़े ।  
 सुते जगाओ ला कुणो,  
 हीन्दु राजा री वेटी ।  
 दाडी दी भोरी यो जुये,  
 इन जुओ जूओली कुणो,  
 हीन्दु राजा री वेटी ।

दान्ता रे कानाटे वुओले,  
 हीन्दु राजा गी बेटी ।  
 जेरे ओ रा लाओ रे तेले  
 दाठी ली वेळणी वेंले ।  
 हो गई ठाकुरा थारी मेवा,  
 थाने रा गाणा पन्थर तायी  
 ठारी की मेवा ।  
 लाला चलां शालाउ  
 रेइणी दा सीगां  
 रूणा यला बोटा  
 मारी पाशा रा सीगां  
 मीड दा चला बग्बिल  
 पलरे दा गणा  
 वारो भुजा गे चोतरु चाला  
 छीचा सयाणां

*Gist* :—This is sung in the memory of two clans. About five decades ago, the people of this area were divided into two clans known as *Pashi* and *Shati*. Relations between these two clans were never cordial. People of Shilwadey village were known as *Pashi* and those of Bhawai were known as *Shati*. Once all the *lumberdars* of these villages and other villages gathered at a place Thapal near Rajana to bury the hatchet and to move towards a compromise.

During the course of this meeting, there rose a quarrel and Chhicha *sayana* of *Shati* clan was killed by the other party. The meeting ended without any result. His dead body was cremated at Ludhiana village. A message was sent to Maharaja at Nahan about the murder. He sent a small contingent of his army to suppress the people of Shilwadey village (*Pashi* clan). The army gave a good punishment. In this song the names of all the *lumberdars* have been given.

*Office of the Census Operations, Himachal Pradesh.*

## FOLK SONGS AND DANCES OF THE GADDI'S

Song and dance are the most natural traits of a race. They provide an effective yardstick of their temperament and the manner they react to the surrounding joy and beauty.

Of all the uninhabited Himalayan people the Gaddis are easily the most remarkable ones.

In features, manners, dress and dialect they are distinct, differing basically from the rest of the population. They mainly reside on the snowy range of Dholadhar which divides Chamba from Kangra. A few have trickled down to the valleys which skirt the base of the chain but a vast majority still live on the highest above. They are simple, virtuous and sturdy. Their womenfolk are beautiful, calm cheerful and bashful. They are indeed a picture of simple elegance. Raja Sansar Chand II of Kangra developed a fancy for a Gaddi girl and married. She was called Gaddi Rani. And this event is rightly the theme of a song and dance.

The Gaddi was grazing the goats  
And Gaddan, cows  
Her earthen pitcher broke on the rocks  
The cows ate grass  
Raja Sansar Chand saw the event and young face  
He fell in love  
And married her.

*Brahmaur, the abode of Gaddis:* Brahmaur, a village of Chamba district in H. P., is the abode of the Gaddi's. One has to travel 22 miles on foot or on pony from the nearest bus terminus at Gehra, to reach this village.

It is an important village, and is distinguished by its 1300 years old temple. To Hermann Goetz, the scenic beauty is comparable to the finest of Switzerland. With such a gorgeous landscape and romantic atmosphere, the Gaddi girl is deeply in love with the hills of Chamba.

Gori is deeply in love  
With the hills of Chamba  
In every home is a *bindlu*



In every home a *tiklu*  
In every home are calm brides  
*Gori* is deeply in love  
With the hills of Chamba

Mani Mahesh is covered with perennial snow, and is regarded as sacred as Kailash. God Siva is believed to have lived here. There are many temples where Lord Siva is worshiped in a typical form. The land of Siva has been the theme of songs and are known as *Anchali*. One of the famous *Anchali*'s goes as under :

O Lord Siva, if you fulfil our desires  
We shall give you a *Nuwala*  
And we would make an offer  
Of eighty goats and eighty four sheep.  
O' God, we want your *darshan*.

And that is why the Siva was so pleased that when --

"The Gaddi tended his sheep on the grass  
The Gaddan offered oblation of flowers to Siva  
He gave sheep to the Gaddi  
But he bestowed beauty on the Gaddan".

A marriage song goes as under :

"Who is that beautiful girl  
Sitting with her hair uncombed  
Who is sitting with his backturned  
Oh, *Gori* is sitting with her hair uncombed  
And *Isvar* (*Siva*) is sitting with his backturned".

*Costume* : Turbaned Gaddi, can be distinguished by his *Chola* (a long wooden coat) and *Dora* (woolen rope). The *chola* tied round the waist with a black rope worn in many lines. It varies from 30 to 200 feet in length and weight about 2 to 3 seers. A Gaddi woman wears a shirt called *Kurti* of cotton cloth and covers it with *chola* or *chola* made woolen cloth. The woolen rope is an essential wear for all including children of five years. The womenfolk are very fond of jewellery. The Gaddi dancer always prefers to dance in his traditional and usual dress.

A Gaddi girl wants to buy some '*Bedis*' from the market and requests her relations in such a manner that our sympathies are enlisted on hearing the song which goes thus.

In the bazar of town 'Bedis' are being sold  
 O my uncle please purchase it  
 The cost is too high, how can I purchase it?  
 O my father's younger and elder brother  
 please buy it  
 Neither of my father's brothers purchase it  
 So my pious mother, please purchase it

*Romantic Songs :* During my study of the folks of the Gaddis I found that the Gaddis were leading richer and emotional life than any other tribe of the Himachal Pradesh. The Gaddi is a care free and happy go lucky fellow. When a Gaddi shepherd plays on his flute, nature nods its head in tune ; the hills vibrate with joy and the distant hill girl dances in ecstasy. The love-sick shepherdess starts to sing in reply :

1. I miss you terribly my Gaddi  
 I miss you very very much
2. This *Patwari* will not write a letter for me  
 though I beseech him a thousand times  
 I miss you very much, my beloved Gaddi
3. I go alone to the spring  
 and drink there in seclusion  
 And suddenly your memory pierces my heart  
 I miss you very much, my beloved Gaddi
4. With naked feet I climbed the hill  
 Hoping to see you when you will return  
 But alas ! my feet are pierced by the sharp thorns  
 And of you there was no sign  
 I miss you very much my beloved Gaddi

Here are a few lines of another famous song which relate to the broken love story of Kunjua and Chanchalo translated by Dr. Karan Singh.

1. I weep profusely  
 While washing clothes, O' Kunjua  
 Come and speak to me,  
 Please come and talk with me.
2. In your hand is a silk handkerchief,  
 O' Chanchali  
 And my ring is on your finger  
 as token of our undying love.

3. Do not leave tomorrow night O Kunjua  
Do not leave me.  
I would sacrifice my life  
To keep you here.
4. I must go tomorrow night, O Chanchalo,  
I must go far ; I have pressing work which  
I cannot ignore.

Many songs about another shepherd Rupnu have been composed. When Rupnu returns to his home, his beloved is waiting for him.

These folksongs are quite simple in composition and are sung with an amazing clarity of expression and each line is repeated a number of times before switching on to the other line. They are sung in high-pitched voice, mostly by women or shepherds while tending their sheep or goat.

*Folk Dances:* The folk dance of Gaddis is of a uniform pattern and is performed by a group who move in a circle swaying their bodies half way round at each step in an easy and graceful manner with the arms alternatively raised over the head hanging down. The dance is always accompanied by songs. The men and women usually dance in separate circles and do not intermingle.

The dance numbers of the menfolk is vigorous and sometimes boisterous too. But the woman moves slowly and gracefully. They clap their hands at regular intervals, and after every 2 or 3 steps sit down on their hunches facing each other and thus they present an attractive sight.

The tempo rises with the notes of the orchestra consisting of *shenai* and *dholak* (Dundum). The musicians sit outside the circle and play their instruments. The dance is full of verve and aplomb and occasionally reaches a frenzied stage with their costumes flying as the dancers whirl round.

Usually the dancers enter the arena after a drink of *sur* (wine). Dances by individuals are generally timid while collective one starting with graceful steps of a happy contented and peaceful people, lead to a frenzied state. An interesting feature is that Gaddis raise a chord 'ho-ho' at the top of their voice, while women dancers alone sing.

*Editor "Sainik Samachar", New Delhi.*

## SIGNIFICANCE OF NANDI FESTIVAL AMONG THE KONDA DORAS OF ARAKU VALLEY

The Konda doras are one of the scheduled tribes<sup>1</sup> in Andhra Pradesh. They are known to their neighbours, under different names, viz., 'Kondalu', 'Kondakapu', 'Pandavarajas' and 'Kondaporja'. According to their mythology which narrates the creation of this Earth by Lord Bhimasura, they are called Kubi.

The Konda doras are inhabiting the five adjoining coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh, viz., Srikakulam, Visakhapatnam, East Godavari, West Godavari and Krishna. They are found in large numbers in Visakhapatnam district with a population of 44,759<sup>2</sup>. The total population of this tribal community in the State comes to 86,911.<sup>3</sup>

The Konda doras celebrate a festival to 'Nandideyyalu' in the month of February (*KOGRIPUSA NELA*). This is not an annual festival. They celebrate this festival in three successive years while in the three subsequent successive years they do not observe any ritual to this deity.

### Origin of Deity :

There are different versions regarding the origin of the deity. However, the main theme stands the same while minor events vary from one version to the other. According to the folk tale narrated by Somili Naidu of Panasavalasa (Soyva Mutta in Araku Valley), the deity was born in the sea. As the story reveals there was neither Earth nor Life, in this world before its creation. The whole surface was flooded with water like a great ocean. Then Lord Bhimasura, the Creator of this world, created a man and a woman and kept them in a gourd which was thrown into the water sea. Later on, He created the Earth, the fauna and the flora. He brought the gourd on to the surface of the Earth, broke it down, bringing the first man and woman on to this world. They got married and in course of time begot seven children. The first of the seven children created the 'Kubi' tribe.

Along with the first man and woman were born two deities called Nandideyyalu in the sea. They are sisters. But they were not brought to the surface of the Earth by Lord Bhimasura. The deities were playing and dancing in the sea. They prepared a basket and began to beat it which produced some rhythmical sounds. This implies that the

deities were not aware of the modern type of musical instruments and that a basket represents the primitive type of musical instrument.

One day a group of seven brothers of the 'Kubi' (or Konda dora) society went on a hunting expedition. On the way they came across a red Eagle called *SOMKISILA GEDDA*. It is said that this Eagle used to carry away men and animals just as a kite carries away chicken, kills and eats them. One of the seven brothers shot the Eagle with his gun. One of its wings fell down. It flew to some distance with the help of the second wing and fell down dead.

Then they proceeded further and found a group of mighty flies called *TEMKARA YEGALI* in a rock cave. At that stage the flies did not know the construction of a nest, hence they were living in caves. It is said that these flies used to kill human beings. So they wanted to destroy its race by a strategy. The brothers approached the flies and said that they were very much displeased with their pitiable conditions of life. They further said that they would construct a nest for them on a tree where they can live comfortably. Taking the consent of flies, they constructed a nest on a tree with tree bark. The flies were very much pleased with the help of men and expressed their desire to enter into bond friendship with them to which they gave their consent. The mighty flies secured a goat and served meat with rice to them. On the third day after the feast flies entered the nest to live in there whereupon the brothers set fire to the nest. All the flies died in the fire except a male and a female who escaped death by flight. The brothers prepared a musical instrument called *DAPPU* from the goat's skin which was killed to give them a feast.

They went on further till they found the sea. They saw two deities dancing and singing on the sea with a rude musical instrument (basket) in their hands. The seven brothers were anxious to go close to them to enjoy their company. But there was a thick fencing of a type of plant called cowach (*DULAGONDI*) encircling the sea on all sides. They felt sad because they could not enter into the sea. Suddenly a field rat (*DONTIYELUKA*) came to them and enquired about the reason for their sadness. They expressed their desire to meet the deities which was not made possible by the presence of thick fencing of cowach. The field rat said that it could help them by cutting some leaves and stems. Finally the way was made ready for the brothers to enter into the sea, whereupon they approached the deities. Then the deities enquired about musical instrument in their hands. The brothers informed the deities about their hunting expedition and explained the significance of the musical instrument. They asked the deities to throw away their rude musical instrument and began to play on the *DAPPU* whereupon the deities began dancing in joy which went on for a week without taking food and

water. The deities got tired and asked them to go back to their homeland. The brothers requested the deities to pay them for their labour and asked them to gift away their tone (voice), song and education to the brothers. The deities refused to part with them, but agreed to teach them these skills. The brothers accepted the offer and learned them from the deities. After acquiring these skills they wished to go to their homeland. While departing the deities expressed their desire to visit the homeland of the brothers and asked them to bring their *DAPPU* when they come to invite them to their homeland.

The brothers revealed the whole story of the deities to the community. They went back to the sea to invite the deities to their homeland. They all started their return journey with a carrying beam across the shoulder of a person in which the deities are placed on one side and the Tone (voice), Song, and Education on the other side. On the way, it rained heavily without the presence of clouds in the sky. While they are mounting up a huge mountain called *KOKKIRIGHATI* the rope network of the carrying beam broke down whereupon they re-knotted the rope network and proceeded further. While descending the *NERAKA GHATI*, the carrying beam itself broke down. They felt very sad. They took fibre from an insect called *POTMADIKA* and prepared the rope network forming a lodgment at each end of the beam. At that time a mighty ant came to their help and offered one of its legs to be used as the carrying beam. It is said that the leg of the ant looked like the trunk of an elephant.

They proceeded further and found a hillstream in hoods which they had to cross. While crossing the stream their clothes got choked. On the other bank of the stream they took rest for a while to dry up their clothes. A bird called *CHHIPIDIPITTA* suddenly came and swallowed the tone (voice) before it disappeared from the scene. Finally when they reached the outskirts the deity refused to enter into the village to take its abode in a nearby anthill. For that whenever they do this festival they have to bring that deity to the village to celebrate the festival. They follow the same even now to honour their commitment. As a preliminary preparation on an auspicious Saturday in the month of February they erect a pendal. On the next immediate Friday the priest is asked to pour *Maddi* (Rice beer) on the anthill which results in the growth of the same (anthill). The newly grown part of the anthill is removed to mix with a kind of wax called *Masara Tene mynam* and water to prepare the images of two bulls. As a part of decoration the broomsticks for tails and the horns of *Garudupilli* (a kind of cat) in the place of hands are attached to both the images of two bulls. Two garlands are also prepared with all the available flowers to decorate the two deities before they are placed in the house of the priest. The duration of the

festival is five days. On the next day evening the deity is taken round the village in procession. Generally the deity is carried by two female members of their society. They were stopped before every house to offer towels. In the meantime the square yard is plastered with cow dung by all before each house and the priest sits there with a new cloth on his thighs. The house-wife keeps nine sorts of grains on that cloth, and another new cloth of a towel size is spread before the priest. Amidst the singing of the priest with excitement, some of the grains fall on the new cloth spread by the women of the concerned house. They believe that it is caused by the deity and they take it for granted that those grains which fall on the cloth spread opposite to the priest will give bumper crop during that season and others do not. The same procedure is repeated throughout before the deity is placed in the centre of the village. It is followed by drinking and dancing by the community.

Even on the third day the deities are taken round the village in a procession. On the evening of the following day an unmarried girl and boy are decorated in a fancy dress to act as *Malidangidi* and *Malidangada* respectively. All the villagers take them round the village simply to enjoy the fun of it.

On the last day the images of the two deities (bulls made of mud) are thrown out in the stream in the outskirts of the village and get themselves satisfied as if they have sent them to their original abode— sea.

### **Significance :**

The belief is that some serious calamity befalls the community when they do not observe the ceremony to this deity. Every family in the village should observe the taboos and ritual behaviours associated with the ceremony, a breach of which causes supernatural intervention in the shape of troubles to the family and the interventions of the head of the community of penalizing the defaulter. The informant recalled a fire accident in a house which was attributed to the unceremonial behaviour of the house wife on the occasion of the ceremony to the deity. They should not rethatch their houses prior to the celebration of this ritual every year. They should not even cut the broom-sticks from the forest. However, these taboos are not observed in those years when they do not celebrate the festival. It is also believed that the deity visits the priest in his dreams and warns him of the forthcoming danger to the community, if there is any.

The ritual has also got some economic significance. The agricultural prosperity of the family is predicted by the grains that fall on the new cloth spread opposite to the priest and the deity when the latter is taken round the village in procession. The grains are counted as soon as they

fall on the cloth. The larger the number of grains of a particular type that fall on the new cloth the greater is its yield in that year. The belief is carried into practice in subsequent years also till another ritual is observed to the same deity.

*Dept. of Anthropology, Andhra University, Waltier.*

## NOTES

- 1 Scheduled Tribes list (Modification Order 1956) A. P.
- 2 THE SCHEDULED TRIBES IN ANDHRA PRADESH Published by Tribal Cultural Research & Training Institute, December 1963.
- 3 *ibid*

## NOTE & NEWS

Twenty-Second Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies will be held at San Francisco from April 3 to 5, 1970 where the following scholars of India who are now in U. S. A in connection with their researchers and studies will take part :

### *Chairman*

Bhabagrahi Misra Hartford Seminary Foundation  
Sociological Analysis of a Chinese Folktale

*Wolfram Eberhard, University of California, Berkeley*

The Tradition of the Fidalgo in the Folklore of Goa

*Lucio Rodrigues, Goa College, India*

The Institution of Marriage in Bhojpuri Folksongs

*Har'S Upadhyaya, Fort Valley State College*

The Indian Oedipus

*A. K. Ramanujan, University of Chicago*

Discussant *Robert J. Adams, Indian University*

\* \* \* \* \*

A meeting of the members of the Indian Folklore Society was held at 3, British Indian Street, Calcutta on February 11, 1970 where the programme for the current year was adopted. Sri Sankar Sen Gupta, General Secretary, placed the programme.

\* \* \* \* \*

Under the auspices of the Folk Music and Folklore Research Institute, Calcutta a folk musical performance by Dr. (Mrs.) Purnima Sinha, Dr. Surajit Sinha and their daughters was held at Calcutta on February 28, 1970 which was attended by both the scholars, performers enthusiasts and interested persons of both the sexes.



## A NOTE ON BALLADS—WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO RAJASTHAN

Ballads form an important part of the immense volume of folk-literature. Most scholars, who have studied this form of folk-literature have defined it as a story told in song.<sup>1</sup> Gerould also describes it in the the same fashion; of course he says that the story is told objectively. Some scholars, when stressing the story and song aspect in a ballad, give much importance to its oral transmission. Thus there are three characteristic properties which are generally talked about with reference to a ballad, namely.

- (i) story
- (ii) music
- (iii) oral transmission.

In these widely discussed properties of the ballads some include refrain as 'a must'. To this, my humble suggestion is that refrain is not always found in the ballads. When surveying the ballads of Rajasthan, I have discovered that in certain ballads there is no refrain at all.

I admit, the essential presence of a long story and music in a ballad. Also, there is oral transmission. But, with these essentials I also wish to emphasise the expression of the tendencies of the primitive mind. This is the only point where a ballad differs from an epic.

Folk-literature is the verbal expression of 'Folk'. Here, 'Folk' implies those people who still possess the remnants of the primitive mind and are surviving in the flow of tradition without the egoistical feeling that undercuts it. Naturally the tendencies of primitive mind is here in the expression of this form.

Specially, in the ballad, where a story recounts the whole life, we find this expression more obviously present. The tendencies of the primitive mind have been studied during the last century by a number of scholars. James Frazer, Franz Boas, Levy, Bruhl, James Harvey Robinson are famous in this area of study.

1. (a) 'Ballad is a Lyrical narrative'—Hazlitt

(b) 'Ballad is a song in which some story is told'—Kittredge.

2. 'a folk song that tells a story with stress on the crucial situation'—Gerould.

Existence of the primitive mind is an acknowledged fact now-a-days. Every one of us has the tendencies of the primitive mind. These tendencies play an important role in our life. Our actions, knowingly or unknowingly are guided by these. As civilization advances, these tendencies, though fading, take different shapes.

Some important conclusions about the primitive mind are being given here. Simultaneously the manner in which these conclusions are expressed in the ballads, also being shown.

(i) Primitive mind used to be *prelogical* i.e., it could not impute a suitable cause to a particular action. It used to form accidental associations. This tendency can be discerned in almost the whole of the folk literature. We find that the hero of a particular ballad is not born in the way in which an ordinary human being is from. Some times the woman swallows a sacred barley, some times in the dream the moon enters the womb of the woman and the hero with extraordinary qualities appears, i.e., the primitive mind, for the birth of a child, never thought the intercourse compulsory. In most of the ballads of Rajasthan we find this. In the ballad '*Nihalde Sultan*' Sultan, the hero, is born of the sacred barley given by '*Guru Gorakh Nath*'. In the ballad '*Pabuji*', also, '*Pabuji*'s heavenly birth is described. In '*Gogaji*' ballad, Goga's birth is attributed to '*Gorakh Nath*'.

(ii) Animistic thinking is the other important property of the primitive mind, i.e., it felt a soul not only in itself but also in all other objects of the world (i.e., the tree, the river, the mountain, everything contained of a soul). These could take or assume any form they liked. There is the goddess of forest, the goddess of the river etc. These goddesses of nature help the hero in achieving his goal. When he is in distress these supernatural beings appear in human form and help him.

In Bhojpuri and the Rajasthani ballads this tendency is widely expressed. A slight extension of this is the behaviour of animals and birds like human beings, they talk, they help the sufferer.

In '*Nihalde Sultan*', a *tortoise* helps the hero of the ballad.

(iii) The third tendency of the primitive mind may be termed as ritual thinking, i.e., to believe that by performing an action through a special method a particular goal can be achieved, e.g., in '*Nihalde Sultan*' ballad the father of *Sultan* is asked by '*Gorakh Nath*' to perform a certain rite to get a son.

(iv) The fourth is fantasy thinking, i.e., the primitive mind could not differentiate between the real and the phantasm. That is why we find in ballads the flying horses, supernatural creatures and actions. Franz Boas described it as :

'In primitive life, religion and science, music, poetry and dance,

myth and history, fashion and ethics appear inextricably interwoven' (The Primitive Mind, Page 226).

There are many corollaries of these four fundamentals which are found expressed in ballads.

These do not get expression in the creation of a learned poet, even if their shadow appears the manifestation, it is not as direct as is found in *Folk lore*.

That is why I want to stress this point. Even Alexander H. Krappe has defined ballad as –

'The popular ballad is a simple narrative poem relating epic events as seen through the medium of a lyrical temperament, popular in origin or by transmission, and fitted for oral circulation.' (The Science of Folklore, page 173).

In this well formed definition also the three factors already said have been repeated

I think it would be more proper to define a ballad as follows :

A ballad is a long story containing the tendencies or shadows of the primitive mind, sung in song, with possibilities of oral transmission.

After defining a ballad we can concentrate upon the ballads of Rajasthan

Rajasthan is rich in ballads. Ballads of Rajasthan can be put in five categories which are as follows –

1. Heroic Ballads. (Veerkathatmaka Lokgatha)

- (a) Bagrawat
- (b) Pabuji
- (c) Tejaji
- (d) Gogaji
- (e) Doongji Jawaji
- (f) Galaleng (on the name of Gulal Singh).

The above heroic ballads are much popular in Rajasthan. All of them are based on the lives of heroes who sacrificed their lives for the sake of cows or to fulfill their words. In the display of the ballads 'Bagrawat', and 'Pabuji', a screen<sup>3</sup> colourfully painted with the events described in the ballad is also used. The singer wears a special Rajasthani dress and play upon the *Been* (an instrument with strings and two toms which is known as lute).

He points out the relevant scene on the screen. These ballads are so much liked in Rajasthan that people are shown to enjoy them all night. The above ballads have traditions of oral transmission and they

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3. For the ballad, have coined the word 'lok-gatha', in Hindi language.

4. The screen is called as phad in Rajasthan

are, even to-day, sung. I have heard and collected them from the singers.

2. The second category is—

Love Ballads.

- (a) Dhola Maru
- (b) Jalal Bubna
- (c) Nagji-Nagvanti
- (d) Sorath.

These ballads are sung by *Langhas*, a '*Jali*', (community) found in Jadhpur and Jaiselmer. They play upon *Sarengi*. Generally two singers sing the ballad. These love ballads are sung in different *ragas*, such as 'Mand', 'Desh', 'Sorth' etc., and in different time. For example the singer would not like to sing '*Sorath*' in the daylight.

The love ballads are so delicate in nature that they prevail upon the listeners and the singer finds himself transported in a world full of love and pleasure. In the end of these ballads, one of the two, the hero or the heroine dies. Still the ballad remains a sweet comedy, because suddenly Lord Shankar appears and brings back the dead to life.

'Nagji Nagvanti', 'Dhola maru' etc., are beautiful love ballads of Rajasthan.

3. Romance Ballads (Romance Kathatmaka)

'Nihalde Sultan' is a ballad full of suspense. A chain of supernatural feats is there. *Jani* a character travels to heaven to get the flowers of 'Kalpa tree' and comes back. There are flying horses, talking tortoises and flying shoes. Sultan the hero is born of the sacred barely given by 'Gorakh Nath'. He fought fifty two wars. These wars have been described objectively in this ballad. The original form, collected from the singer consists of 2500 pages and is available with Dr. K. L. Sahal of Pilani, Rajasthan. The ballad is sung by *Jogis* on *Sarengi*. 'Sultan' the hero has been put as an ideal king, who never speaks lie, who has dedicated his life for his subjects. This ballad is sung in Haryana also. But the quality of ballad found at Haryana is inferior to that of Rajasthan. This ballad contains motifs from the Ramayana, the Mahabharat, Kathasaritsagara etc. All the characteristics given in the definition of the ballads are found in this ballad.

4. Didactic (Nirved Kathatmka)

- (a) Bharthari
- (b) Gopichand.

These two ballads are also sung by Jogis on Sarengi. They are concerned with the famous kings, Gopichand and Bharthari. How these kings abandoned the worldly affairs and became the disciples of 'Guru Gorakh Nath', is shown in the ballads. The ballads are full of 'Karuna Rasa'. These ballads are available throughout Rajasthan and perhaps in other parts of the country.

#### 5. Miscellaneous.

Under this category fall those ballads which have been derived from the 'Mahabharat' or Purans such as,

- (a) Byavlo (Marriage of Lord Shankar)
- (b) Ahemdo (Abhimanyu, the son of Arjun)
- (c) Amba Rasa (the story connected with Gandhari and her dead sons).

The stories told in these ballads are different than that of the Mahabharat and Purans. This is my contention that the stories told in the ballads are never truth. The learned poets have removed the bitter truth or have utilised half truth in polished form.

The above ballads of Rajasthan are true representatives of the heroic culture of Rajasthan. The traditions of braves and their wars, the social customs and beliefs are found in these ballads.

The ballads of Rajasthan are rich from the literary point of view also. 'Rasa' which is soul of the literary creation is found in its natural form here. The ornaments of the language, i.e., the proverbs etc., are in abundance.

We also find the form of religion, what religion means, how folk worships it, can only be studied through these ballads.

A chain of motifs is also available which can be compared and studied in the light of Aarne Thompson's motif index.

Thus the ballads of Rajasthan provide a vast scope of study and they are the true representatives of the true colours of *Folklore*.

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## A SURVEY OF HINDI-DIALECT DICTIONARIES

0.0 The purpose of this paper is to give an account and history of the work done so far on dialect dictionaries of Hindi area. The author does not aim at, presenting the methodology of collection and analysis of data pertaining to dialect dictionaries. He would rather "expect a dictionary of a local dialect to give all the words that are current in non-standard speech with phonetic accuracy and with reasonable care in the definition of meanings".

0.1 In the Western countries the work on dialect dictionaries had begun in the last decades of 18th century. Walter William Skeat founded 'The English Dialect Society' whose aim 'was to collect words with divergent pronunciation, to record technical terms and proverbs and to transcribe specimens of dialect texts'. After that was published Joseph Wright's 'English Dialect Dictionary' in 1905. This dictionary contained 'the complete vocabulary of all dialect words in use or known to have been in use during the last two hundred years'.

0.2 But in India, the work on dialect dictionaries was started in the early thirties of 19th century. The history of Hindi-dialect dictionaries, according to their period, may be classified as follows -

- A. The dialect dictionaries before 1885.
- B. The dialect dictionaries between 1885 1950, and
- C. The dialect dictionaries after 1950

0.3 There is a vast difference of opinion among the scholars about the first Hindi dialect dictionary. One group is of opinion that 'Kutcherry Technicalities' edited by Mr. Carnegie is the first dialect dictionary. The author considered 'A Glossary of Indian Terms' of H. M. Elliot as the first dialect dictionary. But new researches throw light upon another Zillah dictionary' which is in the Roman character. The editor of this dictionary, Mr. Charles Phillip Brown explained in it the various words used in business in India. This remarkable work was published at Madras College Press in 1822. Thus 'Zillah dictionary' of C P Brown stood first in chronological order of Hindi-dialect dictionaries.

1.0 'A glossary of Indian Terms' of H.M. Elliot was meant for the use of various departments of the government of East India company. In 1842, a preliminary 'glossary of Indian Terms', prepared by H. W. Wilson with a blank column on each page for suggestions and additions, was circulated in India as a basis for a comprehensive official glossary.

The only important result of the circulation was a "supplement to the glossary of Indian Terms". This valuable work had been revised, re-arranged and re-edited with additions. Agra, the City of Taj, had the honour of publishing it in the year 1845

1.1 Duncan Forbes edited 'A Dictionary of Hindustani Language' which was first published in 1818, its revised and enlarged second edition came out in 1866. The first part of 'Hindustani English Dictionary' contains 802 pages and the second part 'English Hindustani Dictionary' consists of 342 pages. The presentation is according to Persian character. The first part of this dictionary is based on the following dictionaries and books which may be mentioned here :

- 1 Hunter, Kulliam Dictionary Hindoostanee and English. 2 Volumes, originally compiled by Joseph Taylor for private use Revised and prepared for press by W. Hunter
2. Gilchrist, Dr. Hindoe Moral Preceptor, 8 Volumes.
3. Gladwin A Dictionary of Mohomedan Law and Bengal Revenue Terms, Calcutta 1797.
- 4 Elliot, H.M Aglossary of Indian Terms, 8 volumes, Agra.
- 5 Prof. Johnson, F. A Dictionary of Persian, Arabic and English.
6. Adam, Dr. Hindi Dictionary, Calcutta 1829.
7. Lallu Lal Prem Sagar
8. Thompson Hindi and English Dictionary, Calcutta 1846.
- 9 Herklots, Dr. Qanoon-e Islam, 1824.
10. Dukhnee Unwari Soheelee, 1832
- 11 Wilson, H. H A glossary of Judicial and Revenue terms and of useful words occuring in official documents, relating to the Administration of the Government of British-India, 1842

The second part of Forbes 'A Dictionary of Hindustani Language' is based on Dr. Gilchrist's 'Dictionary, English and Hindoostanee' in two volumes which was first published in 1798 at Calcutta. Its second edition was out in 1819 from Edinburgh.

1.2 Another dictionary is of Patrick Carnegie's Kutcherry Technicalities or 'A glossary of Terms, Rural, official and general, in daily use in the courts of Law, and in illustration of the Tenures, Customs, Arts and Manufacturers of Hindustan'. It was first published in 1853 in Prellryterian Mission Press of Allahabad. Its Hindi version can be seen in Bharitya Sahitya (Volume No. 2-3, July 1957). Carnegie mentioned the fact that he started collection of data in the year 1850. The order of its presentation was in Roman, Nagari and Persian character and explanations are given in English. Its revised and enlarged second edition was published in 1877.

1.3 In the year 1879, William Crooke published his 'A digest Rural and Agricultural terms' or 'Materials for a rural and agricultural glossary of the North-Western provinces and Oudh'. It is a collection of about 15 thousand words. This collection, before publication, was sent, for valuable suggestions and corrections, to the civil and educational officials. It deserves mention here because its first edition was arranged on the basis of subject but its revised edition was in alphabetical order. Another characteristic of this dictionary is that it is a collection of divergent pronunciation of terms. It should also be mentioned here that Crooke utilised the following dictionaries.

- 1 Elliot, H. M. -- A glossary of Indian Terms for the use of various departments of Government of East India Company, 1845.
- 2 Reeds J. R. Azamgarh glossary, and
3. Wilson, H. H. A glossary of Judicial and Revenue terms and of useful words occurring in official documents, relating to the administration of the Government of British-India, 1855.

1.4 With the publication of Crooke's dictionary, we get another 'A new Hindustani English Dictionary' with illustrations from Hindustani literature and Folklore by S. W. Fallon published in the same year. This dictionary is not much of linguistic significance since it deals with more folkloristics than of linguistics. Its importance lies in the fact that 'prominence is given to the spoken and rustic mother tongue of the Hindi speaking people of India, the exhibition, for the first time of the pure, unadulterated language of women and the illustrations given of the use of words by means of examples selected from the everyday speech of the people and from their poetry, songs and proverbs and other folklore'. The compiler has utilised the advantage of residence for many years in Delhi and Bihar, the two poles, so to speak of the Urdu and Hindi phrases of the languages which are together represented in the common term, Hindustani. He also resided at Mathura, the headquarters of the Braj dialect as well as at Agra, Kashi, Ayodhya, Bikaner, and 'Jodhpore'.

The first part of this dictionary consisting of the words nearest in the sense to the root meaning and the next group of words less closely allied to it than the first. No sketches are there in this dictionary.

1.5 We cannot omit mentioning here the importance of John T. Platt's 'A Dictionary of Urdu, classical Hindi and English'. Its first edition came out in 1881. The order of presentation is according to Persian alphabet.

1.6 The above discussion is the first phase of the development of Hindi-dialect dictionaries. This work had a greater importance as these contained technical terms which were prevailing in those days. This type of work contributed a lot in the courts and in government offices in their day-to-day proceedings. These collections of glossaries attracted



government officials as well as non-officials and consequently there came out a series of dialect dictionaries one after another in India and in West. Here, it may be mentioned that the credit for these works goes to the Westerners for their collection, analysis and publication.

The aim of these dictionaries was to collect the terms used in courts and in establishing contacts with Indian villages and culture. It is worth mentioning here that these dictionaries were neither prepared linguistically nor on the principles of lexicography. We largely agree with Dr. Grierson when he says 'Each writer copied his predecessor, according to his capacity, corrected a few mistakes or not, introduced a few more or not, and proclaimed a new gospel which was not new.'

2.0 In 1885, Dr. Grierson published his 'Bihar Peasant Life, a discursive catalogue of the surrounding of the people of that province'. This Peasant life initiated the second phase of the development of dialect-dictionaries. It might be possible that Dr. Grierson might have been inspired by Mr. Lal Bihari Dey's 'Govind Samanta' published in 1874, later its revised edition was called, 'Bengal Peasant Life' published in 1878.

"Bihar Peasant Life" is a collection of about 10 thousand terms, collected from the conversational speech of the people and noted on the spot where it was spoken either by writer himself or by his assistants. It was carefully compared with every available book of reference and where discrepancies occurred, they were either reconciled or explained. Finally, proof sheets were circulated to all the Bihar districts and were again checked on the spot by competent observers different from the original persons who collected the materials on which the book was founded. This book, Dr. Grierson says, 'may claim to be entirely original, and to a certain degree accurate'.

There were two sources of collection of data. First, Dr. Grierson's own researches, secondly, Mr. Crooke's book 'A digest of Rural and Agricultural Terms', and all the books on which Mr. Crooke's book depended. The author does not claim originality in its general system and arrangement. This is modeled on Crooke's book. The terms have been explained with illustrations, sketches and photos.

'Bihar Peasant Life' is an important mile stone in the field of dialect dictionaries whether they are of Hindi or other dialects. It is the main source of inspiration to the Indian linguists. The second phase of the history of Hindi dialect dictionaries ceases with this valuable book.

3.0 It is regrettable that for about five decades of the 20th century, not a single dictionary came out, but with the inspiration of Dr. Dharendra Verma and on the foot steps of Dr. Grierson, Shri Harihar Prasad Gupta collected "Glossary of Rural Industries". Gupta's 'Gramodyog aur unki Shabdawali' (Glossary of Rural Industries) begins the third phase in the development of Hindi-dialect dictionaries.

It is an apt to mention here, that Gupta's work was meant for D.Phil. degree of Allahabad University. His is a limited field of work and brief in scope as well as in collection. His limited scope and brief collection of about 2500 terms, do interfere with his distinction of being the first Indian dialect lexicographer in Hindi area. Dr. Gupta's area was Pargana Ahiraula, Tahsil Phulpur and district Azamgarh. In the opinion of Dr. Gupta, the work of Dr. Grierson is not scientific and authentic because it covers a wide area of Bihar and is done not by a man but by many parties. Thus he selected a little area and collected the material personally with a view to make his work more scientific and authentic. The first portion of his work is arranged according to industries and the second portion is arranged alphabetically. Alphabetically arranged terms are explained with grammar, etymology and the numbers of paragraphs and sub paragraphs are also given. But apart from all these characteristics, Dr. Gupta did not try to explain the terms with sketches and figures. Had Dr. Gupta used sketches and figures, his work would have become more valuable and important.

3.1 Mention may also be made here of a booklet 'Krishi Kosh' (Agricultural Glossary) of Shri Pyarelal Garg, containing 33 pages, published by Nagri Pracharini Sabha, Kashi. This is a mere collection of Agricultural glossary. It is not fruitful even for the people who are engaged in this field.

3.2 Uttar Pradesh, Hindusthani Academy published 'Awadhi Kosh' containing more than 15000 terms in 1955. The author, Shri Ramagya Dwivedi 'Samir', was inspired for this important work by his teacher Dr. R. L. Turner and his great work of distinction 'Nepali Dictionary'. The author personally started his work in the year 1931. The care has also been taken by the author about the phonetic variations available in Awadhi as well as in its sub dialects. The terms are explained with grammar, etymology and supported by idioms, idiomatic phrases and proverbs. The illustrations from Jayasi and Tulsī, the main literary figures of Awadhi, are also given. The presentation of Awadhi Kosh is in alphabetic character. The figures and sketches do not exist in this valuable work.

3.3 In 1956, there came a 'Braj Bhasha ki Krishak Jiwan Sambandhi Shabdawali' (Agricultural Glossary of Brajbhasha) by Amba Prasad Suman. Dr. Suman worked with a view for his Ph.D. research. Two collections, one huge i.e., Dr. Grierson's 'Bihar Peasant Life' another brief i.e., Dr. H. P. Gupta's 'Glossary of Rural Industries' were before him. Dr. Suman was inspired and collected about 11 thousand terms of Agriculture.

The field work for collection of data was made by Dr. Suman himself with a view to make his work more scientific and authentic. That

was why he collected nouns, verbs, indeclinables, proverbs and idioms. When he found any discrepancies, he discussed with the peasants on the spot in Aligarh district. Terms are generally explained with etymology and compared with other dialects. There are about 846 sketches and thirty nine figures used in both the volumes.

Dr. Suman hopes that his work will be helpful in Brajbhasha as a dialect and its literature. He is of the opinion that his scope of work is more wide and more accurate than that of Bihar Peasant Life.

3.4 The first part of the 'Krishi-Kosh' (Agriculture Glossary) was published in the year 1959 with a long introduction containing techniques and methodology of collection, analysis and presentation. Dr. B. N. Prasad who was one of the senior most linguists of India edited this work. This is the only collection which is done with according to the principles of lexicography and with applications of principles of linguistics. The collection of data for this work was made by trained research assistants. Collection was made from the mouths of the people at the spots, the controversial points, if available, were discussed with the people concerned. The proof sheets were also sent to the spots for the necessary corrections before their publication.

Its arrangement is in alphabetic order. The terms are explained nearest to its meaning, after that the place of its existence is also mentioned in abbreviated forms in the brackets. The standard forms of the terms are given and in case there is any slight phonetic variation, that has also been mentioned in it. If a word has more than one meaning, all the meanings are given in order of its nearest relation to the term. The terms are compared with other dialects and to make these terms more clear and accurate, sketches are also given. The synonyms and antonyms given therein are the main characteristics of this dictionary, which are not found in any other dictionaries.

This dictionary, linguistically, has more importance. It is more scientific, accurate and authentic. It is the light house in the ocean of the Hindi dialect dictionaries.

3.4.1 Dr. Prasad not only edited the agriculture glossary but he also inspired his pupils to engage themselves in this direction. Devi Shankar Dwivedi worked on 'Glossary of Baiswari' under the supervision of Dr. B. N. Prasad. Another work 'Glossary of Garhwali' by Haridutt Bhatt was completed under the supervision of Dr. R. N. Sahai of K. M. Institute of Hindi Studies and Linguistics, Agra.

3.5 The study of 'Garhwali Ka Shabda Samarthya' (Glossary of Garhwali dialect) was made by Haridutt Bhatta in 1960. The data were collected by his own efforts for about three years. The presentation of the first part is according to subject and the second part is alphabetical. The etymology is also given for most of the terms. The terms are

analysed on the grammatical categories. But the author did not try to give the sketches and figures to make his work more valuable.

3.6 Dr. Dwivedi in his 'Baiswari Ka Shabda Samarthya' (Glossary of Baiswari dialect) has adopted the same principles as have been established by Mr. Bhatta. The author has tried his best to give etymologies of most of the terms but it lacks in the sketches and figures. The author has also worked on grammatical categories of the glossary. We do not find any difference in the presentation of the works by Mr. Bhatta and Mr. Dwivedi.

3.7 Another work limited in area and matter by Shri Saligram Sharma is 'Allahabad Zile Ki Krishi Sambandhi Shabdawali' (Agriculture glossary of Allahabad district). The first portion of the work gives the details of meanings arranged on the subject, the second part is arranged alphabetically. The author claims the authenticity of etymologies for more than 50% of the terms. Dr. Sharma personally collected the material with an aim to make his work more accurate and scientific. He had the opportunity to discuss the doubtful terms, if available, on the spot.

3.8 After this work, there comes 'A glossary of Kumayun dialect' done by Ram Singh. Mr. Singh travelled, from one place to another in Almorah, Nainital and Pithoragarh districts, for the collection of data. The recording of the divergent phonetic differences, is the only main feature of this work. Etymologies of the terms, sketches and figures are not given.

3.9 Another research work 'Haryana Ko Sanskritik Shabdawali' (Cultural Glossary of Haryana) has been done by Vishnu Dutta Bhardwaj. This work is meant for Ph.D. research and done under the supervision of Dr. R. N. Sahai of K. M. Institute, Agra. The author of this work, Mr. Bhardwaj personally collected the material, and, in an interview, told the author of this paper that all the problems relating to the glossary were discussed at the spots with the people concerned, with a view to make this work more authentic and scientific. The presentation of this work is according to subject. The terms are explained in details and their etymologies are also given at the same time. The second half of the work is arranged alphabetically. The number of paras and sub paras are also given. Had Bhardwaj given the sketches and figures, his work would have become more valuable.

3.10 In 1966, we get another work of Shri Kanti Kumar on 'Chhattisgarhi Ki Gramya Jivan Shabdawali' (Rural glossary of Chhattisgarhi). Its scope is limited upto Surguja district only. This work is divided into two major parts and twenty one chapters with an appendix. The first part consists of an introduction of Chhattisgarh and Chhattisgarhi. The second part deals with 21 Chapters based on Rural industrial glossary of Chhattisgarhi. To make his work more accurate and scientific,

the author discussed the discrepancies, if available, with the peasants as well as other people engaged in the various industries at the spots and removed them. We find even a slight phonetic variation of the terms in this work. The terms are explained on descriptive level with illustrations from idioms, idiomatic phrases and proverbs of local dialects as well as other dialects. The author has also given 16 figures and 151 sketches to make the terms more understandable.

3.11 *Rajasthani Audyogik Shabadawali* (Industrial glossary of Rajasthani) covers Mewar area of Rajasthan. The author, Mr. Brij Mohan Jawahar made personal attempts for the collection of material. The author paid more attention about the divergent pronunciation, if found, and discrepancies were also removed at the original spots. The main characteristic of this, lies in the fact that its terms are explained with grammar, etymologies, figures and sketches. The author, in the first part, deals with Industrial glossary and the second part consists of terms arranged in alphabetic order with etymologies.

4.0 The aforesaid works are the major works of great importance. But apart from all these major efforts, we get minor efforts too. The minor works cannot be excluded from this discussion. As we get in 'Mrinayan' the famous novel of Dr. Vrindavan Lal Verma, the terms of Bundeli dialect are explained in the end. It was made on the advice of Late Dr. V. S. Agrawal. The main aim of it was to make his novel more understandable. In the same way, Dr. K. C. Agrawal and Dr. R. P. Agrawal have also given a little glossary in their works 'Descriptive Analysis of Shekhawati dialect' and 'Linguistic analysis of Bundeli dialect' respectively.

4.1 The major and minor works, if we critically examine, may be classified clearly under two main heads. These works are meant for the purpose of research degree only and independent works. Independent works are very little and may be counted on fingers end. Dr. Prasad's 'Agriculture glossary' and Dr. Grierson's 'Bihar Peasant Life' deserve mention here as independent works.

4.2 The work of dialect dictionaries is not an easy job. It requires a lot of time, hard work and money. Apart from all these, the person or the party engaged in this type of work, needs confidence and patience. But it is a highly gratifying that people are being drawn to this direction. The result of this attraction is that a number of research scholars are engaged in this field. T. R. Sharma's work, 'The glossary of Rural Industries of Muzaffar Nagar', A. C. Gaur's work 'Agriculture-glossary of Tahsil Bhaswat (Meerut district)', N. C. Rai's work on 'Agricultural glossary of Bhijpur (based on Gazipur district)' and H. G. Singh's work 'Agriculture-glossary of Bundeli', all are under preparation.

*Central Hindi Institute, Agra (India)*

## REVIEWS OF BOOKS

BANGLAR LOKA SAHITYA-O SANSKRITI (In Bengali Folk Literature and Culture of Bengal) by Dulal Chaudhury, Lokayata Prakashan, Calcutta, 1376 B. S. Demy, 185. Pages, Rs. 6/-.

The book under review contains seven chapters with three appendices. The chapters are—*Folklore o Bharatiya Protisabda* (Folklore and Indian Synonyms), *Lokayaner Swarup* (Nature of Folklore), *Chharai Banglar Samaj o-itihash* (Society and history as depicted in doggerel), *Banglar Loka Sahitye Nari* (Women in folk literature of Bengal), *Loka Sahitye Samaj Jijasa* (Social awareness in folk literature), *Banglar Loka Sopa: Mukhosh* (Mukhosh—a typical folk art of Bengal) and *Loka Sahitya o Rabindranath* (Folk literature and Rabindranath Tagore) and in the appendices *Loka Sahitya Sanskriti Sangya-o-Bibhajan*, *Bangla Charar Chanda* and *Paribhusha*.

The essays gathered here are all of interest and importance, but it is not easy to detect the underlying theme on which to base judgment. Written for the Post-Graduate students for the special paper on folk literature than for intelligent readers or specialists, book is, intended, as the author says in his preface, as an aid to such students who have taken folk literature as special paper in their studies at the University of Calcutta and Rabindra Bharati. It has been the work to demonstrate regional folk literature, the scientific study of which can fulfil a much needed cultural function. Around this theme the essays move. The range covered, the authorities cited and described is of interest only to workers in that field.

Dr. B. N. Shastri

THE EAST INDIA COMPANY AND THE ECONOMY OF BENGAL (from 1701 to 1740) by S. Bhattacharya, Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay, Calcutta, 2nd edn. 1969. 232 pages. Price not mentioned.

This is an example or the type book which, while a blessing to the readers, is a bane to the reviewer. And where the author is Dr. Sukumar Bhattacharya the problem deepens. The seven chapters with seven appendices are all of interest and importance in tracing the course of events in Bengal from the period under study, especially to the developments consequent on the activities of the East India Company. The author says in his preface to the first edition, "From the materials at my disposal I have tried to give an account of the work of economy of Bengal in this transitional period, the relation of the Government with the European trading settlements, the operation of the mints and currency, the conditions of trade and of the different classes of the people in Bengal". He

has established with data the changes and developments that led to Plassey in 1757 and which is the beginning of about 200 years British rule in India. Inspired by the realization of a work of the type under review, the author has zealously prepared the history of the period that caters to the probing mind of the scholar and the factual mind of the student.

It is a successful attempt at satisfying a great need of the day. Even though it was necessary to review the book thoroughly in the light of modern researches before present edition comes out again and the publishers, Mr. K. L. Mukhopadhyay is conscious to that. So he has given a short note which says that "It is with deep sorrow that we have to state that the author of this excellent research monograph suddenly died when we were halfway through the publication. Apart from consequent delays, we were without his help and guidance in the second half of the book".

C. R. Sen

STUDIES IN TAMIL FOLK LITERATURE, by N. Vanamamalai, New Century Book House Pvt. Ltd., Madras, 1969 XXIII + 152 P. Price Rs. 5/-.

This is a collection of papers read in the International Conference and Seminar of Tamil Studies I and II and an 'eminently scholarly work which is bound to prove very useful not only because of the interest on the subject (in a very readable presentation of it) but also because the work is replete with well documented information of all sorts connected with the Indian folk literature and folklore', says Dr. Sunilkumar Chatterjee in his foreword. The book has the following contents:

- I. Folk motif in the Silappadikaram,
- II. A Study of the Historical ballads of Tamilnad
- III. Consolidation of Feudalism and anti-feudal struggles during Chola Imperialist rule
- IV. Social themes in Tamil folk ballads.
- V. Women in Tamil Folklore.

The first four articles were read to literature and social sciences sections of the 1st and 2nd conference and seminars of the International Association of Tamil Research and the fifth one was written for 'Folklore' at the suggestion of its editor. Besides the above essays, the book also has a scholarly foreword by Dr. S. K. Chatterjee and an introduction by Sankar Sen Gupta. The greatest charm of this study, said the introducer is that the materials which enrich the study still live in the hearts and minds of Tamilians. It is an attempt to reach the mind and heart of unsophisticated people of Tamilnad by their own material which is penetrating and exact. The book is not dry as-dust guide-book. It is potent with human document.

Samir Ghosal

## EDITORIAL

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The world lives in ideas. Since our art, literature, music, philosophy, religion etc. are the systematized bodies of our ideals and bodies, they are all mental entities. Buildings, libraries museums, laboratories etc. do not constitute our institutions they are but the outer garbs. The soul of a university resides in our minds. If by some mysterious catastrophy all material objects books, libraries, museums, laboratories, and so on perish, man will soon be able to reconstruct them; for guiding spirit of all these reside in the social mind of man.

The happiness of man depends, to a great extent, upon the nature of the society in which he lives. The better the condition of human society the better are the chances of man to become happy. Profound thinkers all through the ages, who were anxious to make man happy in life, were definitely conscious of these ideas. A good many of them framed imaginary conditions for the creation of ideal human societies, which on analysis were found to be stereotyped like insect and animal societies of Nature.

Life in utopian societies would surely be monotonous, uninteresting, and gloomy; it can never make man happy. If man wants to plan an ideal society, he must plan for such conditions in this society as can bring about diversities with the development of inclinations and scope for adventurous and creative activities in his life. Man can become great in life only through his creativeness and happiness. It is this happiness which will encourage creative minds of the community to take their natural leads in the field of progress, in science of sociology and folklore. It has been visualized by some that man in the long run will take to thoughts for determining better ways and methods for human welfare and happiness that will fill the life of man of the future. In doing so, every man will have to take part to reconstruct the country through oral traditional materials along with other things. It is an art. To run the machinery of a State methodologically and scientifically is also an art. There are mechanical aspects for this nodoubt but there are also aspects which require knowledge, feeling, tact, and wisdom. The most important factor, however, is the art of utilising all these for the administration of the State and for us the regular publication of this journal. We are fully aware of our responsibilities and our role in the folklore movement. For serving the cause better we solicit active support and co-operation of our readers, well-wishes contributors and advertisers. We request to the subscribers, who have not yet paid their subscriptions, kindly to expedite their payments and readers and well wishers to help us with as much advertisements as possible. Without full-fledged help and co-operation of everybody it is getting difficult to go on with the journal by coping with the cost of production of the journal in these high days of economic crisis.





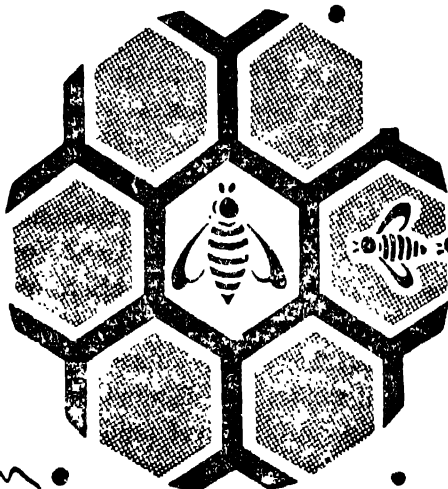
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LEGEND OF CHAND AND BEHULA

ASUTOSH BHATTACHARYYA

## THE SERPENT-DEITY AVENGES HER INSULT

Once upon a time there was a merchant. His name was Chand. He was a great devotee of Siva and would not worship any god or goddess other than Him. The serpent goddess Manasa wanted to propagate her worship in the earth. She approached Siva to find out for her the means by which that could be done. The Great God said, 'If Chand worships you, it will be propagated on earth, otherwise not.' Manasa approached Chand with this request. But Chand continued his devotion to Siva and refused to bow down to her. He dismissed her with insults and she went back disappointed but bent upon retaliation.

The name of the wife of Chand was Sanaka. She used to worship Manasa in secret for the welfare of her husband who had incurred wrath of the goddess by refusing to worship her. When Chand came to know of this, he broke the sacred pot of Manasa with his feet and also insulted Sanaka. The wrath of Manasa was kindled thousandfold. The gardenhouse of Chand was reduced to debris. Men and women died of snake bite. But in no time the lost splendour of the garden was restored through the highest divine knowledge (*Mahajnana*) that Chand possessed. Chand had a friend named Sankar who was an exorcist. Sankar was the disciple of Neta, the washerwoman of the gods. Those who succumbed to snake bite were all brought back to life. Sankar could perform miracles by the grace of Neta. Manasa, in order to deprive Chand of the benefit of his assistance armed herself with the secret of Sankar's death and killed him. Chand's unflinching devotion to his ideal was not shaken in the least. Manasa realized that so long as Chand was equipped with his highest divine knowledge (*Mahajnana*) he was

invincible and all her efforts would prove unavailing. Therefore one day Manasa took on the form of a dancing girl of peerless beauty and appeared before Chand. He was enamoured of her beauty and wanted to marry her. Being infatuated by lust Chand divulged the secret of his divine knowledge (*Mahamana*) to the disguised Manasa. She now took her real form deprived Chand of his highest knowledge which he received through divine grace. Her spirit of revenge was not yet fulfilled. She mixed snake poison with the food of the six sons of Chand and thus killed them all. The tears of Sanaka knew no bound. She tried her best to dissuade her husband from antagonising Manasa. But this was of no avail.

Jhalu and Malu were two brothers of fishermen caste. They arranged for the worship of Manasa in deference to a benest passed through a dream by her. Sanaka stealthily went to the place of worship and expressed her devotion to the goddess. Manasa gave her the boon of a son. But providence decreed that the son would die from snake bite in the bridal chamber in the night of his marriage.

Overwhelmed with grief at the loss of his six sons Chand made up his mind to set out on a mercantile enterprise. One day at an inauspicious hour he launched his fourteen vessels and set out for Patan, a port on the South seas. He ignored the repeated requests of his kith and kin and refused to worship Manasa, knowing fully well that dangers awaited him on his way. He, however, reached Patan without any difficulty. Taking valuable articles from the king of Patan in exchange for his own cheap merchandise, Chand started back for his country. Manasa appeared before him with the request to worship her. But Chand drove her off unceremonially.

At the command of Manasa there was a bore in the sea. In an instant the fourteen vessels of Chand sank in the midst of its high waves. Cast adrift, Chand discovered a bit of refuge, but considering it to be a grace from the goddess Manasa, he refused to take hold of it. He, however, reached the shore with very great difficulty. Deprived of all he had Chand obtained a morsel of food, but it was also snatched away from him through the cruel design of Manasa.

Famished and exhausted, Chand came back to his country at the end of twelve years. His youngest son, Lakhindar, who was born immediately after he left home was now a full grown youth. At the sight of his face Chand, who had been deprived of everything he had, forgot all his miseries. With his hopes renewed he set himself whole heartedly to the task of making due arrangements for his son's marriage. He soon found a suitable bride whose name was Behula.

Knowing that his son was likely to die from snake bite on the night of the marriage he had the bridal chamber made of iron. But by the

decree of Providence Lakhindar died of snake bite on the very night of his marriage in the bridal chamber

Behula who had all devotion to her husband vowed that she would not rest until she had been able to restore the life of Lakhindar. Despite the repeated requests of her parents and relative she decided that she should sit on a raft on the waters of the Ganguni with the corpse of her husband in her lap and go on floating to argue her case with fate. Behula took leave of her father-in-law, mother-in-law and the elder brother one by one. With the dead husband on her lap Behula went away floating on the raft.

The raft reached the *ghat* (landing place) of Goda (a man with elephantines). Goda used to catch fish there by means of angling. Captivated by the beauty of Behula, Goda let her know of her desire to marry her. Behula cursed him saying that he would have his foot pierced with a fishing hook so long as she did not return from the abode of gods. The raft went on floating to the landing place of Apu Dom. When Apu Dom let her know of his desire to make her the principal wife, she cursed him, as a result of which he dropped down unconscious on the bank of the river.

Floating down the river Behula went to the landing place of Dhana and Mana. They were two brothers. They put out their boats to overtake her. In the middle of the river their boats sank. By the grace of Behula they got ashore and were saved. The serpent deity took the form of a tiger and meant to devour the flesh of Lakhindar. Behula wanted to sacrifice herself in order to satisfy the hunger of Manasa, now in the guise of a tiger. Assuming the likeness of a kite Manasa then wanted to swoop down on the ribs of Lakhindar and carry them away. Behula preserved the ribs of her husband by covering them with the skirts of her cloth. The raft then reached the landing place of Neta, the washerwomen of the gods. Behula washed the decomposed corpse of her husband in water and hid the ribs under her skirt.

Behula watched from her raft that Neta accompanied by a small boy came to the river with a big bundle of cloth. The boy was creating disturbance in her work and she slapped it on its face. The boy immediately fell on the ground on its face dead. Neta took the whole day to finish her work of washing the clothes. After she had made them into a bundle and was ready to return she brought the boy back to life. She now went away accompanied by the boy. At this incident Behula realized that Neta must know the secret of bringing the dead back to life. Therefore she approached Neta with the request to help her in her own mission. Neta advised her to beg Siva of the life of her husband by means of propitiating him with dancing in which art she was an adept. Behula went to the celestial court in order to submit herself to the highest ordeal of



her life. Being charmed at the wonderful display of her dance, Siva at last wanted to grant her a boon. Behula begged the life of her husband. Commanded by Siva, Manasa agreed to bring him back to life, but in lieu of it she demanded that Chand must consent to worship her. Behula promised that Chand would propagate the worship of the goddess on earth. So Lakhindar was restored to life. Through the grace of the goddess the six sons of Chand came back to life. The fourteen vessels of Chand floated up with the entire treasure.

Steering her vessel along the Ganguri Behula came back to her country. Chand exulted at his daughter-in-law's triumph. The city of Chand was resonant with joy. But in a trice all joy disappeared as Chand came to learn that at the back of it all there was the promise of Behula that he would worship Manasa. But the determination of Chand gave way before the severe penances of the daughter-in-law and her wonderful devotion. Finding no other alternative he at last worshipped Manasa with his left hand. This submission was not to divine might—it was the concession of man to the affection of man.

*University of Calcutta, Calcutta*

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## TRIBAL FESTIVALS OF CENTRAL INDIA

### Introduction :

Festivals derive, for the most part, from collective ritual. The tendency of tribal behaviour to rely on magic involves the participation of the social group, say, the family, the clan or the tribe, in activities which are held to affect the interest of the whole group. Hence the greater proportion of tribal ritual is collective and most activities involve collective rituals. Meals partaken of in common assume the character of religious ceremonies. Ceremonies for the propitiation or placation of supernatural powers for relief from sickness or epidemics, before hunting or fishing expeditions, during the disposal of the dead etc., are occasions for collective rituals or festivals in which the entire community joins. Agricultural operations are associated with a series of ritual festivals.

Madhya Pradesh, with its variegated tribal population, provides a panorama of colourful festivals varying from tribe to tribe and area to area. Agriculture being the mainstay of tribal economy in this area, it is no wonder that their feasts and festivals are controlled by the different aspects of agricultural operations. Thus, most of their festivals fall either during or after the harvesting season when the people are almost free and they have sufficient stock of foodstuff at their disposal. Those who depend more on hunting will have their festivals during the main hunting season. The Abujmarias of Bastar, for example, who complement their economy, in a large measure, with hunting, celebrate their *Pandum* festival during the community hunt. Offerings are made before they start for the hunt, praying that this and similar ones which follow may be rich with game and the participants may come back with all safety and so on. Feasts and festivals, therefore, have a direct bearing on the economic pursuits of a society. Besides, they also form a source of social solidarity and coherence and provide a befitting vent to their aesthetic urges.

*Meghnath, Bhujalia, Dussehra, Parud, Bhaqornath, Budri and Karma* are some of the many festivals celebrated by the different tribes of Madhya Pradesh. They are briefly described below.

### 1. Meghnath :

Meghnath festival, otherwise known as *Kharuva* or *Khanuva*, is cele

brated by the Gonds of Central India and falls in the first fortnight of *Phagun* (February-March). It may be celebrated on different dates at various places, but all falling within these 15 days.

*Meghnath* is believed by the Gonds as their supreme 'God' who is all powerful and is expected to come to their rescue at the time of need.

The celebration starts immediately after *Holi*, the Hindu festival. The main structure symbolising *Meghnath* is erected beforehand. The paraphernalia consist of a main *Sthamb* (pillar) of about 15 feet high on which is supported a rectangular plank of wood and a long swinging beam pivoted to the former in such a way that it could move freely in a regular circle. A wooden ladder runs to the top of the rectangular plank and is used to go up or come down the structure. Just on the side of this structure is a platform on which are placed ritual objects to venerate *Meghnath*.

Two groups of people attend the festival, one group consists of those who had taken oaths beforehand to offer various sacrifices in lieu of some favour sought, and the other who have come to visit the sacred place just to offer their oblations. Those who have promised to offer sacrifice (generally women) do get possessed and start trembling and moving all their free limbs. A thin rope is tied to the right arm of the possessed. Then a '*Kalas*', consisting of a metal mug containing sanctified water and two betel leaves and an earthen pot full of oil and a wick, is brought by a young maiden. A lighted earthen oil lamp may also be brought with the devotees. This is done to guide the members of the family on the way who tread to the festival site overnight and keep away evil spirits.

To *Meghnath* offerings of coconut, lemon and turmeric are made through *Bhumka*, the priest. Cocks and goats are also at times offered if such a vow was made earlier.

Now the person concerned, man or woman, who has promised offerings are ushered to the *Sthamb*. Those who have promised to climb a certain number of steps in the ladder may do so. On the other hand those who are to undergo swinging are allowed to do so, one by one. The vow for undergoing swinging might have been taken as the result of a serious disease or misfortune occurred to the devotee. Such a person is known as a *Bir*. The *Bir* goes up the ladder and then on to the top wooden plank and is got tied to the tip of the swinging beam on the loin by means of soft but strong clothes with the face directing downward. The person who ties the *Bir* on to the swinging beam may remain on the top of the structure to help the latter to prevent any untoward incident being occurred during swinging. Now a man on the ground, holding a rope attached to the swinging beam, goes round when the *Bir* too gets rotated. Members belonging to the family of the '*swinging*' *Bir* keep their heads

bent downwards and remain under the wooden structure so that evil spirits might not again visit them. This is repeated with every 'swinging' *Eir*.

At the end of the festival, all participants return home after collecting *prasad* (sanctified oblations) to be distributed among their relations. Thus *Meghnath* festival, celebrated by the Gonds, every year reassures them a prosperous year which they believe *Meghnath* deity is bound to bestow on them.

## 2. Bhagoriah :

It is a festival of the Bhils and Bhulalas of the Nimarh plateau of Western Madhya Pradesh and is celebrated just before the *Holi* festival, in the month of *Phagun* (February-March). *Bhagoriah* is considered as a day for the selection of spouses and also for taking revenge on the enemies.

*Bhagoriah* starts seven days before 'Holi' and is normally celebrated in a weekly market which is to be held on that day. It continues for seven days. Villagers, both men and women irrespective of age assemble in the market. Groups of people attending the festival carry with them a huge drum. Unmarried boys and girls go in separate groups to and fro in the market, carrying with them *gulal*, a red powder. While moving about, the boys smear *gulal* on the forehead of the girl of one's choice. The girls too return their love by applying *gulal* on the boys' forehead. If a girl does not reciprocate, it indicates her hatred to become that boy's *ladi* (wife). The willingness is further confirmed by making her eat *majoom* (a mixture of molasses, *bhanga* and green colour). If the girl swallows *majoom* she automatically becomes his "property". Now, they fix up a rendezvous, somewhere in the bushes, on their way back home. Here, the girl conveys her verbal consent and both go to the boy's home.

News of the girl's arrival is informed to her parents and if they agree further steps to regularise the union are taken and they become husband and wife.

The day is also considered to be a day for taking revenge. Challenge to one's enemies is made when he dances in groups at the festival. It goes without saying that most of the people who attend *Bhagoriah*, drink to the full which, according to them, "makes one forget the fret and fever of life." In former times the enemies did accept the challenge and fights did take place. Now the strict police patrol deployed in and around the festival site prevents such calamities. The police are also very strict in collecting the lethal weapons, which the people are expected to surrender the moment they enter the festival site, and are returned to the owners when they go back. In spite of all these safeguards, many cases of fighting are reported.

### 3. Bidri :

This is a festival of the Gonds and is celebrated just in the beginning of the calendar year, the exact date of which is often fixed in the village assembly. Until *Bidri* is celebrated the agriculturists are tabooed from sowing seeds. *Bhimsen* is the presiding deity of the festival. Other subsidiary deities worshipped during Bidri festival are *Ghat*, *Bhulawa*, *Kudopen*, *Sreepen*, *Toda Diga*, *Vag Diga*, *Samyagi Diga* and *Bhasmasur*. The *Bhumka* (village priest) is deputed to collect, through the village *Kotwar* (watchman), kind and cash for the propitiation of the deity.

The villagers assemble a day earlier at the *Bhimsen mandir*, which is usually on the eastern side of the cattle path, with necessary ingredients for propitiation. They also make effigies of *Bhimsen* and worship them. That night the *Kotwar* of the village announces to the villagers that the village would be 'closed' the following day and hence, plastering, sweeping, grinding etc. are not to be done. Next day, early in the morning, the *Bhumka* goes round the village playing on his bugle called *Dhurra*. This ritual is called *Gaon bandhna* or closing of the village. Till this is over all the activities of the village are stopped. When the *Bhumka* finishes his round he plants some creeper on the cattle path and the villagers after finishing their morning duties, worship the bathing ghat. This is followed by offering of incense and coconut to god *Bhimsen* and worship him. Side by side with him, other minor Gods of the village are also propitiated. The *Bhumka* now does the ritual called *Dahya* in which he scrapes a portion of the field in the village and fires it. This may be repeated a couple of times. He now sows some seed in the ritually 'burnt' field and the rest distributed to the villagers to be mixed with their grain meant for sowing during that season. This ritual appears to be the survival of an earlier custom when they used to practise *dahya* or 'slash and burn' cultivation.

### 4. Karma :

*Karma* festival is celebrated by the Gonds, Binjhar, Manjhar and Oraon tribes of Central India.

During the month of *Bhadon* (August-September), when the rains have just begun, the Gonds fetch a branch of *Kalmi* or *Galdu* tree from the forest, wrap it up in new cloths and keep it in their respective houses. On that day the inmates of the household will have a grand feast and both men and women sing and dance accompanied by musical instruments around the *Kalmi* branch, the theme often being sexual. The dance is called *Karma* and is the principal dance of the Gonds, which they repeat at intervals all through the cold weather, and consider it as their great amusement.

In the month of *Kunvar* (September-October), Gond girls carrying an earthen pot with holes on it and a wick oil lamp and a clay image of dove inside, go round from house to house, singing and dancing. They collect contributions of foodstuffs from the villagers and have a feast. "In Chattisgarh, among the Gonds and Rawats (Ahirs)", reports Russel and Hirala, "there was from time to time a kind of feminist movement, which is called the *Stri-Raj* or 'kingdom of women'. The women pretend to be soldiers, seize all the weapons, axes and spears that they can get hold of and march in a body from village to village. At each village they kill a goat and send its head to another village and then the women of that village, come and join them. During this time they leave their hair unbound and think that they are establishing the kingdom of women. After some months the movement subsides, and it is said to occur at irregular intervals with a number of years between each. The women are commonly considered to be out of their senses."

### 5. *Bhujalia* :

Besides the tribal communities, especially the Gonds, *Bhujalia* festival is celebrated by the Hindu castes of central India as well. This festival, it appears, is celebrated with a view to predetermining the success of the ensuing crops. It is celebrated during *Shravan* (July-August). Any day in the *Shukla Paksh* (bright fortnight) of *Shravan*, villagers purify themselves by taking bath and plastering their houses with cowdung. Then some seeds are sown in a *Churku*, a conical basket woven at the top of a piece of bamboo, and the same is planted at one corner. The earth used in the *churku* is brought from the spot where *Holi* fire was lit. Propitiation of gods and goddesses is an inevitable event during this time. The seeds are watered every day.

The nature of the ensuing crop is predicted on the basis of the sprouting of the *Bhujalia* (seedlings). If the seedlings are strong and long the ensuing crop is believed to be a bumper one.

On the day of *Chathurdasi* (last day of *Shukla Paksh*) men and women assemble at the headman's house in their best attire. There, they sing and dance in accompaniment of drums and other musical instruments. Then they go to each and every deity in the village and propitiate them. In some villages *Bhujalia* may be kept in leaf cups and floated in the water of a nearabout stream. It is a common sight to see that those assembled pass remarks at the floating *Bhujalia* of others. Some of them may also take home a little *Bhujalia*, which is offered to the family deities.

### 6. *Dusserah* in Bastar :

*Dusserah* celebrations in Bastar are the combination of the 'sacred' and the 'secular' in which all the tribes join. It is sacred because it is

an occasion to seek' blessings of *Danteshwari Mai*, the guardian deity of the erstwhile Raja of Bastar, and secular because it is an occasion to re-assure the faith of the people of Bastar on their king. Though the details of the festival have undergone a lot of change with the merger of the State with the Indian Union, the basic idea behind the festival remains intact. Various ritual roles are played by different tribes which they consider as their traditional right.

The function at Jagdalpur, in front of the royal palace, starts with the propitiation of *Danteshwari mai* on the *Ashwan Amavashya* (October-November) by a Panka maiden below 12 years of age. She is dressed in special clothes to look like a "goddess" and her maternal uncle acts as a priest, chanting *mantras* and offering incense. The whole atmosphere becomes suffused with a supernatural air and by and by the girl gets possessed by the deity. Now, she is ceremoniously "married" to the priest.

On the second day *Kalash Sthapana* is performed at the temple of *Danteshwari Mai*. A Halba man is selected to play the role of an ascetic (*jogi*) for the rest of the 9 days. He is believed to undergo all the ordeals on behalf of the king so that the king may vicariously get the benefit of this penance.

On the third day a chariot procession is taken out with the *Chhatra* (umbrella) of *Danteshwari Mai* heading it. The Mahar drummer, seated on a horse back, leads the procession. The Munda, Halba and Dhakadas also have their respective roles in the procession.

The heavy and massive chariot made of *Sal* (teak) wood is drawn by the Murias or Dhurwas. The chariot is prepared by the Bhatras. The *Lohars* (black smiths) are to prepare the clamps, while *Sonars* (gold smiths) supervise the construction of the chariot.

The new chariot is used only for the last two days of the festival while the old one (of the previous year) is used for the remaining eight days. Everyday, till *Navarathri*, the same procession with similar festivities continues.

On the *Navarathri* day there is a ceremony known as *Kumari Puja* in which 9 unmarried girls are fed, clothed and worshipped. The corn used for their food is from the newly harvested crop. On the same day the *Jogi* in the pit is brought out, washed, clothed and allowed to offer *pooja*.

Another important item is the reception given to the image of *Danteshwari Mai* brought from Dantewada on foot in a palanquin.

On the *Vijaya dashami* day, the new chariot is taken out in procession along with the image of *Danteshwari Mai*. This day the chariot is drawn by the Dandani Madias. On the next day the image of *Danteshwari Mai* starts its return journey to Dantewara.

## 7. Parad Parv :

This festival is celebrated by the tribes of Bastar in the month of *Phagu* (February-March), when they undertake a ceremonial hunting expedition in which hundreds of men join. The hunt continues for a number of days and as such the members of the hunting party carry with them sufficient quantity of food.

It is believed that the ceremonial hunt would help the multiplication of animals in the forest, have good rains and a bumper crop. During the hunting season they keep away from agricultural operations. Women are not allowed to participate in this ceremonial hunt.

There are various types of *Parad*, such as (i) *Chidayi parad*, when they hunt only birds, (ii) *Chotti Parad*, wherein villagers co-operatively hunt small animals; and (iii) *Beej Parad*, also known as *Bari Parad* or *Beej Vettah*. *Beej Parad* is the important ceremonial hunt. Before the party starts for the expedition, the *Perma* (*Poojari*) propitiates sylvan deities and sanctify the hunting weapons and seed brought by the members of the expedition. He also predicts the nature of the hunt.

On the same day they start for the expedition. Game is collected, cooked and eaten co-operatively every night. The seed brought with them is mixed with the blood of slain animals and taken home to be mixed with the seed meant for sowing during that season.

*Parad* is practised for a number of days and the game bagged on the last day is brought home to be shared by the members of the family.

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## MANIK PIR WORSHIP AT TAMRALIPTA<sup>1</sup>

### I

The present article is an attempt to trace the history of Manik Pir at Tamralipta (modern Tamluk) in the district of Midnapore, West Bengal. Before we go into details of Manik Pir, a short introduction on Pirism is necessary for proper understanding. There are some religious practices current throughout the Muslim world which are not found in the Koran. One such practice is the adoration of Pirs.<sup>2</sup> "Pir is a term denoting a spiritual director or guide among the Sufis or mystics of Islam. The functionary described by the title is known as under the names : Shaikh, Murshid, Ustadh. Pir is a Persian word, but is applied to a spiritual guide more commonly in India and Turkey than in its native home ; Shaikh in our special sense is in general use throughout Islam ; murshid is also wide spread, but in Turkish or Arabic speaking countries rather than in India ; ustadh is found in Persia".<sup>3</sup> Thus in the popular terminology the Sufis of fame and power who used to give spiritual instructions and sometimes showed supernatural powers, came to be known as Pirs in Bengal. These Pirs have been raised to the rank of deities, not only in Bengal but also in other parts of India. In this connection it is to note that "the priesthood of Islam is two fold. The law and dogmas are expounded by the Mullah or learned teacher ; the spiritual submission to, and communion with, the deity is inculcated by the Pir or spiritual guide. There are four famous Pirs—(1) Abdul Kadir Jilani, (2) Abu Ishak Shami of Chisht, (3) Mohindin Naksh-band and (4) Abdul Kadir Sohar-Wardi who are universally revered throughout the Muslim world, and all subsequent Pirs belonged to one or other of their spiritual

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1. The present study which is primarily based on field investigation, has been possible for a research grant awarded to the author by the University Grants Commission under the scheme of "Financial Assistance to the teachers of Colleges/Universities for research/learned work". While conducting the survey, I have been greatly assisted by the History Honours students of our College especially by Sriman Kamal Kumar Kundu. I am also grateful to my elder brother, Sri Prafulla Kumar Maity, M.A., P.G.B.T., who has kindly gone through this article and has suggested a few improvements.

2. Mitra, A. (Ed), *The Tribes and Castes of West Bengal*, 1953, p. 267.

3. Hastings, J. (Ed) *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. X, p. 40.

guides in an unbroken series to the Prophet, who is styled the fountain head of all Pirs".<sup>4</sup> The Pirs were revered not only in their life times but also they are revered after the extinction of their mortal lives. When a Pir departs from this life, he is commonly believed to be still present in spirit and out of this belief, his dargah or tomb, i.e., the mosque erected on the grave of the Pir becomes a place of pilgrimage.<sup>5</sup> In India both Hindus and Muslims visit the dargahs or tombs of different Pirs for various purposes and offerings are made to them for the fulfilment of some desired objects.<sup>6</sup>

## II

Pirism or the worship of Pirs or Muslim saints in Bengal, according to Abdul Karim, "was not of Bengali origin, rather it was imported from the west through Northern India by the immigrants."<sup>7</sup> This view of Dr. Karim is objected to by Dr. Anjali Chatterjee who writes that "the worship of saints or Pirs in seventeenth century Muslim society seems to be of Hindu origin".<sup>8</sup> Dr. Chatterjee has failed to note that before the 17th century the practice of worshipping Pirs by the Muslims was current in Bengal as known from the works of Bejoy Gupta and Mukundaram Chakrabarty, the Bengali poets of the 15th and 16th century A. D. respectively and that Pirism is practised throughout the Muslim world as we have already pointed out. Dr. Chatterjee has depended much on an article of Mr. Muzaffar-ud-din Nadir,<sup>9</sup> in drawing the above conclusion. However, the observation of Dr. Karim deserves special consideration. Pirism found a great foothold in Bengal as known from the mediaeval Bengali literature.<sup>10</sup> Of course the reason is not far to seek. It is thus

4. Mitra, A. (Ed.), op. cit., p. 267-268.

5. Cf. ibid., Ray Chaudhuri, T. Bengal Under Akbar and Jahangir, Calcutta, 1953, p. 145; Karim Abdul, Social History of the Muslims in Bengal, 1959, pp. 162-170; Chatterjee, A., Bengal in the Reign of Aurangzeb, 1967, p. 235.

6. Mitra, A. (Ed.), op. cit., pp. 267-1, Karim, op. cit. pp. 169-170.

7. Karim, op. cit., p. 163.

8. Chatterjee, A., op. cit., p. 234.

9. "Pirism" (corrupted Sufism), Islamic Culture, Vol. IX, pp. 177-181.

10. Bejoy Gupta Padma Purana, Ed. by B. K. Bhattacharyya, Banu Niketan, Barisal, p. 57; Mukundaram Chakrabarty, Kavikanth Chandu. Pub. by Basumati Private Ltd., Calcutta, p. 68.

(ক) পীর থাকিতে কেন ভূতেরে সেলাম ॥

গোদা থাকিতে কেন ভূতেরে নোয়াড় মাথা ।

( বিজয় গুপ্ত, পৃ. ৫৭ )

recorded: "The existing local population, the Buddhists had the practice of worshipping the *Chaityas* or the *stupas* and adoring them with flowers and burning incense. The Hindus had an identical idea in their Avatarism. The Pirs appeared to them either as the Tantric *Gurus* or the teachers of the Sakta order. It is no wonder that the converts found the Pirism in Islam somewhat parallel to their own traditions and superstitions. The following facts lend support to this conclusion. First, a large number of places where the tombs of Muslim Sufis or their *chillakhanahs* stand to day were originally Hindu or Buddhist sites. Secondly, sometimes false tombs were erected in those places. They became the places of pilgrimage and satisfied the superstitious nature of hundreds of people."<sup>11</sup>

In Bengal the adoration of some Pirs and Gazis may be traced back to the early mediaeval period. References to the worship of Pirs and Gazis are found in the works of mediaeval poets of Bengal. There are some Pirs whose references are not found in any text but they are enthusiastically worshipped by the village folk. The worship of Manik Pir at Tamluk, according to local traditions, may be traced back to the mid 19th century, though the cult of Manik Pir in Bengal may be traced back to the 15th or 16th centuries A. D.<sup>12</sup> Mediaeval village poets of Bengal composed songs in the honour of this Pir and a few collection of those songs popularly known as *Manik Pirer Jahuranama* have been published.<sup>13</sup> Even to day folk songs known as *Manik Pirer Gan* are sung in various districts.<sup>14</sup> As regards the historicity of Manik Pir, Dr. A. Karim casts doubt and adds that among a number of imaginary Pirs viz. Ghora Pir, Kumbhura Pir, Madari Pir, Manik Pir is one of them. But the wide prevalence of the worship of Manik Pir in many districts of

(১) ফোলেমানি মাল দবে                      ভগ্নে প্ৰিব পেগম্বরে  
 পীরের মোকামে দেয় সাজ ॥  
 দশ বিংশ বেবানাবে                      বসিবা বিচার কবে  
 গুণদিন পড়ায় কোরান।  
 সাজে ডালা দেহে ভাটে                      পীরের শিরণি বাটে  
 সাজে বাজে দগড় নিশান ॥  
 ( মুকন্দরাম, পৃ. ৬৬ )

11. Karim, op. cit., pp. 163-165.

12. Ibid. p. 169.

13. Basu, G. *Bangla Laukik Devata*, p. 171. See any standard book on Bengali literature.

14. Haq, I., *Gange Sufi Prabhava*, p. 210; Deb, C. R. *Bangla Palligita*, p. 110; Basu, G. op. cit., p. 171; Bhattacharya, A. *Loka Sangit Ratnakar*, Vol. 1, p. 1673.

Bengal<sup>15</sup> and the composition of folk songs in honour of this particular Pir support the historicity of Manik Pir. Of course the name 'Manik' itself is not a Muslim name and it is a later coinage owing to Hindu influence. Now the original name of this Pir is lost into obscurity and probably due to this reason Dr Karim thinks that Manik Pir is one of the imaginary Pirs like Ghora Pir, Kumbhira Pir, etc. Dr D. C. Sen who has depended on the work written in honour of Manik Pir by Munshi Pijuruddin, proposes a different view. He writes, "Who this Manik Pir was is a difficult problem to solve, shrouded as the account of him is in all manner of rural fiction. His own name and that of his brother are Hindu; his mother's name Dudh Bibi is also Hindu, the maidservant of the house was Hira, and that is also a Hindu name. His father alone bears a Mahomedan name. For this we can only guess that he may have been of Hindu extraction, or more probably he may have been born in a family converted from the Hindu to Islamite faith. The anecdote which describes his restoring the dead cows and bullocks to life may be legend based upon some healing power that he possessed in regard to the diseases of the sacred animals of the Hindus. This probably explains the reason of the extraordinary respect paid to him by the rural agricultural Hindus who are worshippers of cows. But this is a mere guess. In the legendary account that we have, he does not appear as a mortal but as one whose acts are all super human. *In spite of all these legends, however, he is not an imaginary character and must have lived as a saint or prophet in Bengal sometime after the Muhammadan conquest*".<sup>16</sup>

### III

From the published Bengali versions, from the folk songs still current in different parts of Bengal and from the present day worship, a detailed history of Manik Pir may be reconstructed. A brief outline of the story is as follows:

The Allah one day announced:

"Sei Jane diba ami dunyar bhari  
Kalikale Manik habe avater"

*English:*

I will give him the sole responsibility of the world who will be born as avatara and will be named as Manik in the age of Kali

Thus being blessed by the Allah Manik Pir was born in the earth. How Manik Pir has received the attention of the people is also known to

15. Haq, op. cit., p. 110; Basu, G., op. cit., p. 171

16. Sen, D. C. Folk Literature of Bengal, pp. 122-123. (Italics are mine)

us. One devoted to Dudh Bibi,<sup>17</sup> the daughter of a Nawab, saw a boy in a forest while she was bathing in a river. Dudh Bibi became very sympathetic to see the boy and enquired his whereabouts. The boy gave his identity and said that he was an orphan and his name was Manik.

“Manik deyan bale suna bali mai  
dunyate phiri ami ma bap nai”.

Hearing the story, Dudh Bibi was about to cry and the boy accompanied her to her residence. This boy was none but Manik Pir of fame who still deserves veneration from the Hindus and Muslims alike.

Manik Pir was religious minded from his boyhood and he became a saint. He also acquired some supernatural powers which he exhibited first to a cowherd family as known from the folklore materials. Manik Pir came to the family as a faqir wearing a coloured cap on the head and carrying a club on the one hand and a pot containing the germs of diseases on the other and asked for a quantity of milk from the mistress of the family. The mistress told the faqir that there was no milk in her house at the moment, though actually there was milk. Manik Pir became very angry with the mistress who told a lie. The mistress of the house was also angry as soon as she was called a liar. Then she asked the faqir to milk a cow as much as he could and to satisfy his hunger. However, the mistress pointed a barren cow to the faqir and as soon as Manik Pir touched the nipples of the cow which was a barren one, profuse quantity of milk came out. Thus Manik Pir milked the barren cow who never gave birth to a calf. Though seven big pitchers were filled with milk miraculously, yet not a drop of milk was given to Manik Pir by the mistress who carried all the pitchers inside the house. Manik Pir became very much annoyed and exhibited his power for the second time. He left the place but he supernaturally inflicted germs on the cows and bullocks of the cowherd family which he visited. Many cows including calves were dead. This created a terror in the cowherd locality. Many persons including the village head began to go out in search of the faqir. The faqir was found out and all the people of the locality begged pardon. The faqir was pleased and all the deceased cows and bullocks including calves were restored to life. The faqir also gave his identity. Since then Manik Pir has been getting worshipped by the people of Bengal. Of course no one knows exactly where he lived. Many places of undivided Bengal have been assigned as dargahs or tombs<sup>18</sup> of Manik Pir and the

17 In the work of Munshi Pjiruddin written in honour of Manik Pir, Dudh Bibi is referred to as the mother of Manik Pir.

18 Usually many dargahs of a particular Pir have been found in different places of Bengal. It is also true in case of Manik Pir. A few dargahs of Manik Pir of West

pilgrims visit these tombs for the fulfilment of various desired objects and the people pay their offerings and sometimes votive one. One of such tomb of Manik Pir popularly known as *Manik Pirer Than* is found at Tamralipta (modern Tamluk), Dist. Midnapore, West Bengal.

#### IV

The present story of the worship of Manik Pir at Tamralipta is based on field survey which has been conducted for five days in the month of *Paush* (December, 1968-January, 1969) B. S. 1375. The dargah of Manik Pir at Tamralipta is a mud house shaded by tiles. The house is east facing having a window on the south and door on the side of the house. The floor of the house is metalled. The Pir emblematically worshipped by a rectangular brick built two stairs inside the house and is held in high esteem in the locality. The Manik Pirer Than i.e. the dargah of Manik Pir, is located on the road side. Many buses from Tamluk, Panskura, Tamluk Mechada, Mechada Serampur via Tamluk, Panskura, Haldia via Tamluk, Panskura Narghat via Tamluk, Mechada Narghat via Tamluk run daily on the above road and the conductor of each bus, while passing on the above road, throws a coin of ten or five paise or more in honour of the Pir with the hope of safe journey of the bus concerned while persons of other vehicles are passing by this road they also do the same practice. Even the passersby show their respects to the Pir either by throwing coins or by saluting him. Besides these numerous votaries visit the dargah for various purposes as we shall see latter on. Moreover, the worship of Manik Pir is not confined to any particular section of the society. From our survey it is clear that persons from all castes and creeds pay their respects to the Pir. The antiquity of this particular Manik Pir, according to local traditions and the statements of the owners of the Pir, may be traced back to the mid 19th century. There are vast landed property endowed for the maintenance of the dargah but a little income out of this land is spent now for maintaining the dargah and for his worship. The reason is not far to seek. The dargah of Manik Pir had been erected by a particular family in the mid 19th century and that family has been now split up. Naturally the property of Manik Pir has been divided among many owners and as a result of this it is now nobody's business to look after the Pir. Of course

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Bengal may be mentioned here for their popularity. (1) Village - Sonadanga, P. S. Krishnanagar, (2) village Kumatpur, P. S. Chakdaha, (3) village-Katdanga, P. S. Harin-ghata (Nadia), (4) village Kotrang, P. S. Utaipara (Hooghly). Any way like the spread of the worship of a particular deity or cult from one place to other, the worship of a particular Pir with the establishment of dargahs as offshoots of the original one (i.e. where the Pir is believed to be engraved) also spreads from place to place.

though the owners of the Pir spend nothing or very little, yet they earn money out of this dargah.

**Periods and methods of worship  
priestly function and sacrificial offerings :**

The dargah of Mamik Pir at Tamluk is visited by a large crowd and among the votaries the women form the majority. Votaries especially the womenfolk visit the dargah for various purposes. A devotee can offer *puja* on any day to Mamik Pir but usually the first and last Sunday of each Bengali month are being considered as the suitable days for the worship. Naturally a great number of votaries come on these days in the morning from 6-30 A.M. to 10-30 A.M. People also visit on other Sundays of a Bengali Month. Besides the first and the last Sundays of each Bengali month people also visit the dargah in large numbers on the last day of the month of Paus (December-January). Most of the votaries to the dargah especially the mothers along with their children have their baths in a tank adjoining to the dargah and this tank belongs to the property of the Pir and is known as *Pirer Pukur*. It is popularly believed by the votaries that the water of this tank is sacred and to have bath in this tank yields good results (i.e. the purpose of coming to the dargah is well served). Customarily at the time of bathing one has to dive thrice. Children about five years and above are also made to observe this practice. Waters of the said tank are sprinkled on the bodies and heads of the children below five years. Sometimes turmeric pastes are rubbed on the bodies of children before they are made take their bath in the tank. The *Khadem* (i.e. the owner cum priest of the dargah) charges 10 paise per head from persons intending to take bath in the tank. Of course there is exception to this rule. Sometimes votaries intending to take bath in the tank bring some quantity of rice and vegetables. In such cases a lump sum is charged. Before taking bath votaries pay their offering i.e. *Sirn* which consists of sugar cakes. Sugar cakes are available in the temporary shops which are found only on the first and last Sunday of each Bengali month or in the permanent shops located at a distance. After having their baths, the votaries are generally instructed to leave the place without paying any look to the dargah. It is said by the *Khadem* that the persons who observe this instruction or rather taboo will get good results. It is interesting to note in this connection that according to the traditional Hindu custom and practice in India usually a votary or votaries come to a Hindu temple or shrine after having his or her bath or sometimes he or she is to take bath in the tank or pond attached to the temple or shrine concerned before he or she offers the offerings (*puja*) to the deity. But in case of the worship of

Manik Pir at Tamluk, the practice is altogether different. It is contradictory to the Hindu practice, though most of the votaries to the dargah of Manik Pir of our discussion (98%) are the Hindus.

The *Khadem* of this dargah charges 25 paise for each *pūja* as *dakshina* (fee). Of course exception is there. At the time of offering *Manat pūja* after the fulfilment of certain specific desire, the *Khadem* charges additional *dakshina* and the persons concerned are to comply with this demand. Manik Pir is promised with the images of clay horses to be offered by persons especially by the mothers of the sick children for the fulfilment of various specific desires. At the time of the offering *Manat Pūja* one has to offer double the number of clay horses as a rule and these images of clay horses are available in the temporary shop or in the permanent one. Sometimes the votaries do not observe this rule by pointing out their financial inability. The significance of offering the clay horses, as explained by the mothers having their children, is that their children should be cured from sickness and other child diseases by the blessing of Manik Pir and that they would be able to run like horses having good physic and be free from diseases.

The first milk of cow, which bears a calf, is offered to the dargah of Manik Pir. It is believed that if the first milk of a cow is poured on the emblem of Manik Pir the cow concerned has to give more milk by the blessing of Manik Pir. Besides offering the first milk for gaining more milk from the cow, it is also found that for the safe delivery of a cow the owner of the cow makes *manat* to Manik Pir with the saying that the first milk will be offered to Manik Pir. The *manat* is fulfilled after the safe delivery as he promised earlier. Thus the offering of the first milk of a cow on two occasions as stated above is widely current in the dargah of Manik Pir and it belongs to the category of sacrificial offerings. This practice of offering the first milk to Manik Pir may have originated after the example of the story relating to this Pir. Moreover, in another text written in honour of Manik Pir it is stated that after exhibiting the power to a cowherd family (Goala) Manik Pir ordered all Goalas thenceforth to offer the first Milk of a cow which would bear a calf to the earth.<sup>19</sup>

The priestly function is carried out by both the male and female members of the owner of Manik Pir and sometimes by the male relations of the owner family. The priest after taking the sacrificial offering (*sirui*) from a votary/votaress enters inside the dargah and then either touching the offering to the emblem of the Pir or without touching it, the priest comes out. Before the priest comes out he/she keeps a few sugar-cakes in a basket and then returns the offering to the votary/votaress.

19. Sen, D. C., op. cit., p. 122.



concerned. For sometime past *bel* (bilva) leaves and flowers are kept inside the dargah and these are given with the offerings as we often find the practice in the Hindu temple or shrine. On enquiry I have been told by the priests that they have arranged so they are required by the Hindus who form the majority of visitors. It is a unique example of Hindu-Muslim unity. Those who come with the cow milk offer all to the Pir. The priest pours some quantity of milk on the emblem of the Pir and the rest is kept on a pot which the priest carries home along with rice and other vegetables collected as offerings from the votaries. The dargah is attended by a priest from morning to evening (upto 8 P.M.) everyday.

### **Purpose of Worship :**

Manik Pir of Tamluk is worshipped for the following purposes which are given below chronologically in relation to their popularity.

#### **(1) Curer of diseases :**

(a) Manik Pir is worshipped as the curer of children's sickness and debility of health especially of rickets. Usually the mothers along with their children pay their offerings to the Pir with the hope of their children's recovery from sickness. Sometimes grandmothers also visit the dargah with the hope of their granddaughters' and sons' recovery from sickness. Sometimes quack medicines are distributed by *khadem* in the name of Manik Pir at a certain cost.

(b) Manik Pir is especially worshipped by women as the curer of female diseases in particular and other diseases in general. Sometimes mothers-in-law visit the dargah and offer *pupa* to the Pir with the hope of their sons-in-law's recovery from different diseases.

(c) Women visit the dargah of Manik Pir not only for their own recovery and their children's recovery from different diseases as stated above but also for the recovery of their husbands' madness, temporary insanity etc.

(d) Children who make water in bed come either independently or along with their mothers or relatives to the dargah of Manik Pir, offer *pupa* and have their bath in the tank of Manik Pir. It is popularly believed that such children may be cured from their habit by the grace of the Pir. Children are usually asked by the *khadem* to have their bath on the four continuative Sundays to get good results. Children between 5 to 15 years come to the dargah as our survey records.

(e) Manik Pir is also worshipped as the curer of cow diseases. When an epidemic of cows breaks out in a village, Manik Pir is ceremonially

worshipped by the villagers of the affected village. Now a days this practice is becoming obsolete here. Of course this practice is strictly observed in the dargahs of Manik Pir at Kumarpur P. S. Chakdah (Nadia), Kaldanga, P. S. Haringhata (Nadia), Kortrang P. S. Uttarpara (Hooghly) and many other places.

## **(2) Milk-giver :**

Mothers who have babies in their laps but lacking in breast milk visit the dargah with the hope that they will be blessed with profuse breast milk by the grace of Manik Pir. I have been told by many visitors that either they or their relatives have been successful in their purpose of coming to the dargah. This remark has been made out of their past experiences. Sometimes a few persons visit the dargah when their mother cows produce less milk. In both the cases the purpose of coming is to increase milk both in the mothers' breasts and on the mother cows. Mothers coming for this purpose first offer *pūja* to Manik Pir and then take their bath in the tank of Manik Pir. To have bath in the tank is a compulsory practice. Now the question comes how Manik Pir has been empowered to bless profuse breast milk on the mothers having children. As we have already observed in the story that Manik Pir supernaturally milked a barren cow and profuse quantity of milk came out from the nipples of the barren cow. This association of Manik Pir with the cows in general and the cow milk in particular leads the folk people to believe that if Manik Pir be pleased, mothers lacking in breast milk may be blessed with profuse breast milk. Of course it may be the case that psychologically advanced persons of the locality who were interested to make the Pir of our study popular, might introduce this practice. The reason of the origin of the practice may be otherwise. Such introduction of the new powers on a particular deity or on a person who has been raised to the rank of a deity like Manik Pir and so on is a common phenomenon in the history of folk religion of Bengal.

## **(3) Remover of barrenness :**

It is believed that Manik Pir has the power of removing barrenness. To remove the stigma of barrenness from women many barren women come to the dargah of Manik Pir either on the first or last Sunday of a Bengali month, offer *pūja* and take their bath in the tank of Manik Pir. This practice is also observed on the last day of Paush (December-January) when a fair is held on the courtyard of the dargah of Manik Pir.

#### (4) Other objects :

Manik Pir is also worshipped (i) for the general welfare of the family, (ii) as a *gramadevata* before any auspicious rite, (iii) as the result of the fulfilment of a specific desire like passing an examination, winning over a litigation, getting a service, finding a lost article etc. He is also worshipped for other troubles such as faithless spouses, poor crops, financial loss, mysterious disappearance of belongings etc.

It is interesting to note in this connection that in all the above cases people make vows to Manik Pir and when their vows are fulfilled, persons come to the *dargah* and fulfil the vows.

#### Fair :

A fair is held every year on the last day of Paush (December-January) on the courtyard of the dargah of Manik Pir at Tamluk. The fair is attended by a good majority of the people. On the same day there is another fair centering the goddess Bargabhima at Tamluk. In this connection we may also remember the fairs held in other places of Bengal in honour of Manik Pir. In the village Kumarput, P. S. Chakdaha (Nadia) a fair is held every year on the last day of Paush on the courtyard of the dargah of Manik Pir. The fair is attended by Hindus and Muslims alike. On this day the Muslim faqirs earn money through begging by singing the songs of Manik Pir. A similar fair is also held in the village Katdanga, P. S. Haringhata (Nadia) every year on the first day of Magh (January-February) over an area of 2½ acres of land near the dargah of Manik Pir. This land belongs to the property of the Pir. The fair continues for about seven days and there come about fifty shops in the fair. The fair is attended daily by a crowd of four hundred persons of Hindus and Muslims. In the village Kotrang, P. S. Uttarpara (Hooghly) a fair is held on the last day of Paush which continues for three days. Thus the fairs which are held in different places of Bengal centering Manik Pir, are of great importance in the field on socio-cultural studies in Bengal.

It is often heard in Bengal that Manik Pir is said to be the saviour of mankind (*Manik Pir bhavanadir pare-jabar-na*). This indicates the popularity of Manik Pir in Bengali society. Of course now a-days the popularity of the Pir has been diminished to a great extent. It is owing to the spread of western education and the effect of industrialisation. The same is true in case of the folk-religion of Bengal in general. There is no denying the fact that Manik Pir of Tamluk still occupies an important place in the history of folk religion as sketched from our exhaustive and detailed study.

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## PARA FESTIVAL OF THE NAIRS OF KERALA

### **Introduction :**

*Para Procession* is one of the folk festivals of Nair community of Kerala which has escaped the notice of sociologists. The origin and development of this folk festival is obscure. This particular festival is associated with the Nair community from time immemorial. This is a survival of their traditional profession. Nairs formed the militia of Kerala till recently. The festival has become extinct in certain parts of Kerala. The present study is based on observation and information from the former Cochin State area of Kerala. No attempt is made to evaluate the significance of this festival.

### **What is Para ?**

*Para*, literally means a measurement, and figuratively it signifies the offer of paddy, flowers etc. to one of the Bhagavati temples. The offer of *Para* was very popular before the Independence. Still, this time honoured festival can be witnessed every year in the rural areas of Kerala. The rituals of the festival described in the present study are based on the *Para* processions of Bhagavati temples such as Kannanpuzha, Panai, Kalappurakkavil etc., situated mostly in Chalakudy area of Cochin State. These Bhagavati temples command an overwhelming sway over the people of the erstwhile Cochin State of Kerala. [As Kannanpuzha *Para* has crossed the barriers of taluks and districts and holds a prominent position in central Kerala, the history of the temple is traced in brief outlines in the appendix.] Only the essential elements of the *Para* festival are described here. Thousands of villagers offer *Para* to the Kannanpuzha deity without any distinction of caste and community in the Hindu society. Muslims and Christians is sacreligious to offer *Para*.

### **The Para Procession :**

After the harvest season in the month of Makara (February-March) is over, the *Para* procession starts from one of the Bhagavati temples to which the people of not only the particular locality where the temple is

situated, but the majority of the inhabitants of the district owe allegiance. The procession always starts on foot. No sort of conveyance is used. The personnel of the procession consists of the ordained oracle of the particular goddess, two unordained assistants, seven to nine (always in odd numbers) drummers, one hornier, one cymbalist, one bugler, one treasurer and a number of extras. A burning brass lamp with cotton wicks immersed in coconut oil is lighted from the temple of the deity and the flame is carried to different places where the procession calls on. The emblems of the deity consists of one long piece of crimson calico cloth, a sword, two jingles, two coconut flower spathes and the burning lamp lighted from the temple. The lamp is carried in front of the procession by one of the unordained assistants of the oracle and the other emblems of the deity are carried by the other assistant of the oracle. The rest of the party follow them.

The procession stops at several houses in the surrounding villages to receive the offer of *Para*. The treasurer of the deity knows by heart the particular Nair households who owe allegiance to the particular goddess. He may even refresh his memory from the Account Book which he carries with him to make necessary entries of the receipt of *Para*, if his memory does not serve him well, or if he is a new man. In fact there is no necessity of taxing his memory, as the announcement made by the drummers by a flourish or two on entering a particular village is itself a proclamation to the villagers that the *Para* procession is marching and they are required to be ready with their offer.

### **Auspicious periods :**

*Para* is offered by all the inhabitants of a village, except by the Christians and Muslims. At the time of offer of *Para* there should not be *pula* (pollution) in the house which offers this customary contribution. During death, delivery and menstrual pollution periods *Para* is not offered. In death pollution *Para* will never be offered. There is some relaxation in respect of birth and menstrual pollutions which we shall point out later on.

### **Preliminaries of the offer :**

First of all the courtyard of the Nair household is swept clearly and purified by washing it with cow dung emulsion. The central portion of the courtyard consisting of an area of about 8 ft.  $\times$  8 ft. space is subjected to a second or third treatment of cowdung emulsion. The procession, during its routine round, calls on the Nair householder or the latter sends an invitation to the oracle to receive his offer if he apprehends any

polluted period. Now-a-days *Para* is received from communities below the status of Nairs on request only.

As soon as the oracle and his retinue enter the stilt of the homesland, the lady of the house receives them with utmost cordiality and importunes them to take their seats in mats spread out in the portico of the house. The party is then served with light refreshments and conventional necessities, such as betel, tobacco etc. When the party has sufficiently recouped, preliminaries of the ritual aspect of the offer of *Para* are gone through.

A few lines, magical in nature, are drawn in the central portion of the courtyard which has been subjected to a special treatment of cowdung emulsion by a paste made of rice flour. A *Para* (the wooden measuring vessel which has got a capacity of 2/5th of a bushell) is brought by one of the members of the household and it is placed in the centre of the lines drawn. This is generally done by one of the members of oracle's party

#### **How *Para* is offered :**

After the preliminaries are over, one full measure of paddy (about 15 seers) is brought in a conical basket from the granary of the household by lady of the house and she fills the *Para* with paddy by her own hands.

As soon as the oracle and his retinue reach the household, the emblems of the deity are kept in the granary. By the time the *Para* is filled in, these are brought to the courtyard which has been subjected to special treatment and deposited there

The lady who offers the *Para* should earlier have taken bath before filling in the measure. She must also have worn her dress in the traditional manner. By the traditional manner of dressing, I mean, that the lady should have worn a tight under cloth in the tucked fashion, over which a piece of cloth, six yards long (*onnara* in the local language) and sufficiently wide enough is worn. Saris are never worn on this occasion. The upper cloth, in the good old days consisted of a *rouka* (a peculiar kind of blouse covering the trunk, from the neck to the waist) over which a soft long cloth is put on in the fashion of a half sari. Now this is substituted by a blouse. No shoes are put on while the *Para* is filled in. Besides the *Para*, two *sedungalies* (measuring about 1¼ seer) are also required to be filled in. In the absence of the lady of the house, females according to their seniority, fills in the measure, if they do not suffer from any disability, such as birth, menstrual and death pollutions, widowhood etc.

Disabilities are of two kinds: (a) Personal, such as birth and menstrual pollution and (b) Family, such as death in the household or

*Tarward*. If anybody is suffering from personal disabilities, she generally withdraws and leaves the house for a short while, so that *Para* is offered. A lady in her menstrual period cannot witness the offer of *Para*. But there is no objection if there is a lady polluted by birth. However, she is not allowed to defile emblems of the deity or the retinue of the oracle.

A fresh coconut spathe, decorticated and spread out, is stuck in the middle of the paddy in *Para*. By the side of *Para* is placed two *edungalies* (containing about 1¼ seers of paddy). After the filling in ceremony of the *Para* and *edungalies*, the musicians and drummers come forward to the courtyard and take their respective stands. The drummers stand in two rows. The cymbalist stands behind the drummers. The bugler and horner stand face to face to the drummers. There is an instant flourish. The oracle, who has not so far entered the courtyard, in the meanwhile goes to the backyard of the house and get himself dressed to the occasion.

The long crimson calico cloth is tied to the waist in the *karha* style over which the free ends of it are allowed to hang down. Another piece of the same stuff is worn over the chest. After the ceremonial dressing, he makes his entry to the courtyard where the *Para* is placed. The appearance of the oracle is marked by slowing down the flourish. A song, in praise of the deity whose votaries are the Nair who offers the *Para* and the retinue of the oracle, is sung. The oracle fixes the lower end of the sword in the *Para* and puts on the jingles on his wrist. The two unordained assistants of the oracle also take their stand left and right of him an open coconut flower spathe encased in its wooden handle in each one's right hand, placed crosswise.

### **The Oracle in wild frenzy :**

The oracle standing with his sword fixed in the *Para* works himself to frenzy and trembles slowly, gathering momentum, for about three to five minutes without removing the sword. The song in praise of the deity continues in the meanwhile to the accompaniment of the musical instruments. The eyes of the priest are shut and he is probably in communion with his goddess. His assistants in the meanwhile perform the *panatullal*. This consists of moving in a rhythmic way in a circum-balutary motion of the oracle and the *Para*. The atmosphere becomes reverberating with raising and slowing of the pitch of the music. With gradual flourish of the music the oracle becomes violent in his frenzy and makes circumambulation of the *Para* seven to nine times with the sword hurling and jingles grating. The music is now stopped and the assistants retire, leaving the oracle in the field. He dashes to the senior-

most member of the household, placing the sword horizontally in his fist, and utters a few plaintive words to the effect that the goddess will never allow famine or pestilence to visit the household of the devotee who has offered the *Para*. After uttering a few such words he returns to the *Para* and circumambulates the *Para* again and repairs to the next senior member of the household. This time he asks whether the latter has got any complaints. The complaints, if any, couched in abstract terms will be placed before the hierophant and appropriate remedies suggested in the most cryptic language. The ladies are never given any such counsels. Sometimes the oracle consoles the householder that he need not be worried about certain happenings such as the death of a member of the family etc. The first time when the oracle approaches the householder, he gives him *prasadam*, consisting of a few grains of home-pounded rice mixed with a few grains of paddy which was kept near the *edungalies*. While he is in the wild frenzy, he throws away similar *prasadam* to the assembled folk. After the oracular auditions, the priest retires and quickly removes the ceremonial dresses. He takes sufficient rest to recoup his energies.

Sometimes the oracle in his frenzy makes slight bruises on his scalp with the sword and lets the blood gush, if he receives orders to that effect from the goddess by way of clairaudience. If a member of the household is ill or had the family taken a vow to offer such a sacrifice, the oracle goes to the cackyard of the house where a cock or a goat is decapitated after necessary *pujas* are performed with a single blow of the sword. The children are not allowed to witness such sacrifices.

#### **Offer in cash etc. :**

The family members are expected to offer a few coins on the sword while the orle is on his frenzy. A few coins are also placed inside the *Para* measure, by a lady who has filled in it. The assembled folk might also offer small amounts. All the money received on the sword will go to the orle and the money placed inside the *Para* to the deity.

Occasionally householders offer goats, cows etc in fulfilment of certain vows. These animals are put to auction and the money realised will go to the goddess. The decapitated cock is consumed by the inmates of the house. The oracle and his retinue do not partake of sacrificial animals. In fact, they are strict vegetarians, atleast during the *Para* season.

The paddy offered as *Para* will be stored in a bag and the treasurer makes entries in his notebook the amounts, in kind and cash, received from each particular Nair householder and other inhabitants. The paddy is sold, if there is one to purchase it on the spot, or taken to the temple. If the householder himself is willing to get the paddy back, he is at liberty to retain it, provided he pays the market price. As there is restriction



on the movement of paddy and other food-stuffs and considering the inconvenience of carrying them, paddy, animals etc. are disposed of then and there or taken to the main thoroughfare of the village and put to auction.

### **Kanji and Athhazha Paras :**

We have so far described the simplest form of *Para*. Some householders invite the whole party for a midday meal. It is, in that case, known as '*Kanji Para*' (rice gruel *Para*). There are some householders who might have taken vows to offer either a *Kanji Para* or an *Athhazha Para* (supper). The name *Kanji* (rice-gruel) *Para* is a misnomer, for it is a feast in which several vegetable curries, butter milk, pudding etc. will be served. The supper *Para* is really a grand feast. Besides the members of the *Para* party, relatives and invitees of the householder will also be fed sumptuously. The actual *Para* offer will take place after the meals in the case of *Kanji Para* and after the *Para* in the case of *Athhazha Para*. In case there is no invitation for a feast either for the midday or the evening, the matter is reported to wealthy people of the village whose duty it is to feed the party. In no case the party spends the paddy or money received from the people as offer. There are certain household in most of the villages that are bound to arrange for such meals.

### **Different kinds of Paras :**

We have, in the preceding paragraphs, described the most important and essential elements of *Para*. Sometimes the *Para* may be elaborate for instance, a wealthy householder may offer several *Paras*, consisting of parched rice, flattened rice, jaggery, flowers, plantain etc. besides the usual paddy. Those who have taken vows to offer such *Paras* will also fulfil their obligations, if they have the means for it. The goddess condones any delay, if her devotee is in bad times.

The flowers used for such *Para* are *Chelli* (*Chrysanthemum Indicum*), shoe flower (*Hibiscus rosa Sinensis*) and *Pala* (*Echites scholaris*). Only a particular species of flowers is to be filled in a *Para*. No other flowers are generally offered. The oracle's frenzy and the music etc. will be a little more elaborate in the case of *Kanji*, *Athhazha* and other different *Paras*. When flowers are offered, they will be thrown over the oracle's head in his wild frenzy. Consumable articles will be distributed among the assembled people. Except the paddy, nothing else is taken to the goddess.

### **Return of the Party :**

*Para* offers are received from several contiguous villages of Chalakudy in the case of Kannanpuzha, Kalappurakkavil and Panai deities, such as Karukutty, Angamali, Kaladi, Manjapra, Manickamangalam etc.

If the time at the disposal of the oracle is short and if he is in hurry to return to his headquarters, he may take up the *Pura* from adjacent houses by visiting one of them in his frenzied state, provided all the preliminaries had been completed by the householder or the oracle's retinue. An important fact to be noted in this connection is that the lamp lighted from the temple is never allowed to go off. New cotton wicks and oil will be used as and when necessary. The lamp, together with the sword and other emblems of the deity, will be kept in a sanctified place by the oracle, usually inside the granary room of a Nair *Tarwad*, for the night. None impure is allowed to touch these sacred objects. The coconut flower spathe is occasionally renewed when its brightness vanishes. Thus the party gets free of cost from any householder who has got a coconut grove.

Another fact to be borne in mind in this connection is that the members of the oracle's party and the oracle himself are not polluted by the visit of a low-caste man, for example the Paraya, Paravay, Thadar, to the *Pura* festival. They are also at liberty to offer *Pura*, if they can afford to, or have taken vows to that effect.

The party is expected to be present, wherever it may be, at the time of the birth-day ceremony of the deity. During the half *mandala* (21 days) in the month of Vrischika (November-December) there is drawing of cabalistic figures and singing of appropriate songs to the occasion in the temples of the deities. The expense connected with it will be defrayed by the inhabitants.

#### Qualifications of an oracle :

The oracle must be a man of robust health and of fine physique to withstand the vagaries of his profession. He will be required to receive 10 to 15 *Puras* a day. He is required to be 'possessed' and be in frenzy for several times a day. He must remain continent during the whole of the *Pura* period. He should grow his hair like a lady. There is no objection to his getting a clean shave of his face. During the frenzy the hair knot will automatically be untied and his tresses will be falling down. With the long tresses, the crimson cloth on his breast and the *kathu* style of dressing, he may be suspected to be a woman in frenzy while he is discharging his odious duties. He is generally a man with pock-marks on his face.

The selection of the oracle is by means of lot. A list of candidates who offer their candidature for oracleship is prepared and each individual name is now-a-days written on small bits of paper and rolled up. The shebait of the deities takes a roll random from the lot and that particular person becomes the oracle, after offering 41 days' *bhatana* (devotional prayer) at the deity's temple, abstaining himself from intoxicating

drinks, meat, fish and sexual intercourse. There is no objection to his being a married man. After the *Para* period is over, he need not keep abstinent, but during the period when he is receiving *Paras*, he should remain continent.

If the selected candidate shows signs of oracleship after 41 days' prayer, he is then ordained. If the selected man becomes infirm, another one is chosen. No oracle can pull on with his arduous tasks continuously for a number of years. Resignations are, therefore, very usual and replacement immediate. There is no compulsion from any quarter. After all, it is a job of dignity, as the Malayalam proverb says: 'Oracle is known to every body, but he does not know any one'. The oracle must hail from a respectable Nair family of the locality.

The *Para* procession occupies the oracle and his party engaged for about six months a year, during which time no one visits his native place, unless there be any domestic exigency. The assistants of the oracle must also remain continent during the whole season of the *Para*. The other members of the party are not expected to be abstinent, but they generally do so out of reverence and violation of the etiquette may invite the wrath of the deity and he may have to pay a heavy penalty for incurring the displeasure of the goddess.

### **Supernatural Powers of oracles :**

Oracles are men versed in magical lore. Patients will be cured by tying a consecrated thread dyed with turmeric and lime. Some of the oracles have proved themselves able to produce small-pox pustules even instantaneously. There is a popular belief that the ordained priests of *Para* deities have supernatural powers and can perform miracle. The oracles, it is further believed, possess telepathic powers. Many a villager bears testimony to it. To cite an instance of the supernatural powers of the oracle of Kannanpuzha deity. The last ruling Maharaja of Cochin who passed away not very long ago was once camping at his Kanjirapalli palace. He had for some time been the victim of a peculiar skin disease. Dermatologists and sorcerers could not cure the special skin disorder even after prayers and material offerings to several deities. Under these circumstances, the Maharaja decided to offer a *Para* to the goddess of Kannanpuzha. The *Para* had to be taken from the patient's palace. The officiating high-priest of Kannanpuzha temple, the most senior member of the Thekkedath Nambudiris, after performing necessary worship, sent the ordained oracle of the goddess to receive the *Para* from the palace, after giving the emblems of the goddess. The inspired oracle began to tremble violently no sooner than the sword was handed over to him. Working himself to wild frenzy, he straightaway

proceeded to the royal chamber and pointed out a particular place by his sword. When the place marked by the oracle was dug out, a few magical Yanthrams were unearthed. Necessary propitiatory rites were performed and the Maharaja became completely cured. Since then the Maharaja of Cochin and his family have become special devotees of the Kannanpuzha deity.

## **Appendix : ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF KANNAPUZHA TEMPLE**

### **Preliminary :**

Some of the present day reputed temples of India were once the shrines of aboriginal tribes of India. The patron deity of Travancore is Sri Padmanabha, whose image was found out by a low caste Pulaya lady. Most of the rural and urban temples of Kerala were the properties of Pulayas. The study of the history of these temples, their elevation to the Hindu pantheon, the status of the original owners of the shrines etc. will be fascinating. In most of the Hindu temples of India the low caste people had certain rights and access during stipulated periods, after the proselytization of their deities into the Hindu fold by the Brahmans.

Rural India is the home of many female deities. Certainly every village has its own guardian deity. There may, in some instances, be more than one deity in a particular village. Temples dedicated to goddesses are found, as a rule, all over Kerala. Quite apart from the presence of one or more deities, a group of villages may possess a Desadevatha. This is well illustrated in the case of the goddess of Kannanpuzha.

There are many reputed temples all over Kerala, like the pre-Christian era temple of Cranganore, Chotanikkara etc. It is said that there are 108 temples dedicated to Bhagavati, consort of Lord Siva, all over Kerala. Though not one among them, the deity at Kannanpuzha attracts thousands of devotees from every nook and corner of Kerala.

### **Location of the temple :**

Kannanpuzha temple is located on the northern bank of the river flowing through Chalakkudy, a town and Railway Station in Cochin area of Kerala State. The temple is about one and half a mile east to the railway station. Though the temple is the private property of the Nambudiris of Thekkedath Marathompilli Mana, the goddess is not.

### **History :**

Though there are no written records as to the consecration of the image, it is said that the temple belonged to another Nambudiri family of

the name of Kidangazhiyath Mana of Chalakudi before it was handed over to the present owners. It is believed that the shrine was given as a gift to the Thekkedath Nambudiris about three hundred years ago by the Kidangazhiyath Nambudiris as the former did not possess an approach road to the Chalakkudi river to perform the ceremonial abution after the performance of a *Yaga*. The Vedic rites enjoin that *Avibhrithasna* must be performed in a river by going through one's own land. At that time the Kidangazhiyath Nambudiris were in bad times and could not offer the daily worship to the goddess, as their abode was further off, at Nandipulam area. In consequence, the temple was given as a gift together with the landed property attached to the temple for defraying the expenses connected with the daily worship. Thus Thekkedath Nambudiris became the owners of Kannanpuzha deity about 300 years ago, but I am not certain how long did the temple remain as private property.

### **Tradition :**

The present stone image of the goddess is believed to have sprung up spontaneously. The head of the image is slightly inclined. Tradition attributes that once a Pulaya (aggressive serf) was gathering ensilage in that particular place and as his sickle had to be sharpened he used the stone not knowing that one day it will attain godhead. As he sharpened the sickle blood gushed out from the stone. The serf was alarmed and the matter was reported to the Nambudiris. It is believed that the deity at the top of the image is due to this. The name of the aggressive serf was Kannan and the locality came to be known as Kannanpuzha (from Kannan's *puzha* a corruption of *pura* household). Kannanpuzha is the name of the particular locality where the temple stands and it is not the name of the village as a whole.

### **Worship :**

The consecration of the image is in the form of a water goddess since the sandal paste and turmeric powder used for daubing the goddess are washed away by the rain drops dripping from the eaves.

Within living memory the Nambudiri ladies of the Thekkedath Mana used to offer the consecrated meal (*nivedya*) bringing it from their kitchen. No daily worship was offered. During those days the deity was the family goddess of the Thekkedath Mana. Consequent upon the apotheosis, the goddess began to command the respect of the inhabitants of the locality and daily *pūja* was instituted.

Formerly there was only a Srikovil (*Sanctum sanctorum*) and a small edifice surrounding it. In 1920 the old edifice was dismantled and a new

permanent solid structure was erected. Besides, the present square building, surrounding the inner rectangular structure, was also constructed. Since then simple *pūja*, twice daily, is being offered.

About ten years ago (1955) a great purificatory ceremony was performed. After this the fame of the temple has considerably increased. The number of devotees visiting the temple daily has gone up. *Pūja* is offered by the Thekkedath Nambudiris, being the fittest persons, as they are the high priests at the Kottiyur Mahadeva temple as well. Ritualistic worship is offered only in the morning and in the evening the goddess has to be content with a simple meal.

### **Festivals :**

During Durga *Pūja* days additional lamps will be lighted and special oblations offered to the goddess. 'Kurusī', turmeric and lime dissolved in water, is offered by the Thekkedath Nambudiris themselves.

The most important festival is the *Thalapoli*, the birth day ceremony of the goddess which falls on Aswathī, the first lunar asterism, in the month of Kumbha (February-March). Five to seven caparisoned elephants together with a large number of drummers, trumpeters, buglers, cymbalists etc. are employed for the occasion. Besides this, Kathakali, Ottanthullal and other dramatic performances will also be arranged. During the festival the goddess is taken on a caparisoned elephant to the villa of the Nambudier owner of the temple and worship is offered at his residence, after which the image is returned to the temple in state.

Thekkedath Nambudiri is also the high priest at the temple of Kottiyur, which is not far off. Once the priest was returning home at night. He was awe struck on the way surrounded by forest and his presence of mind was disturbed by the roar of wild animals. Suddenly a lady with a lighted lamp appeared before him and showed the way. It is believed that the lady was the family goddess of Kottiyur Perumal. Since then, she has also been installed in an adjoining temple, not far off from the Mannanpuzha temple, where worship is done by low-caste *Iravas*. A small-scale *Thalapoli* is performed here on the same day when the grand *Thalapoli* at Kannanpuzha is celebrated.

The orchard on the western part of the temple is a gift from a Nambudiri widow of Chorli Mana, who died issueless. This orchard is known as 'Chorli orchard' and the adjoining paddy field 'Kannanpuzha patam', the original gift of the Kidangazhiyath Nambudiri who handed over the temple to the present owners.

*Indian Folklore Society, Calcutta*

## THE MAGICAL CONCEPT OF THE MOTHER GODDESS

The basic concept of worship got its recent religious colour while each individual group tried to influence the others. Phenomenal changes in the by-gone days made man terrorized and as such by name they imagined some gods and goddesses to give release from the wrath of nature. The concept of God did not come originally through reverence; rather man formed the idea of god through fear from the wrath of nature. This state continued for a long time. Becoming wiser man rebrushed his ideas and felt the necessity for representing his faith in an unseen power through religion. But for regional influences of various sects diversity in religions would not have suffered differences from the basic qualities of its surmons.

The categorization of gods and goddesses, too, has been largely determined by sectarian consideration. When one group overpowered others, conversion from one religion to another would be the natural sequel. Love of God was seldom a positive dynamic force for the adoption of any religion.

The concept of an all-powerful but benevolent God is relatively recent. The Universal Mother Goddess Kali, spreading destruction all around, is a legacy starting from long before the pre-Aryan times. Thus it explains,

‘Kali korabhadana bhishkrantatipus  
Bichitra khattangedhara naramalabibhusana’

Inner significance of ‘Sakti cult’ was misinterpreted to the common people and as such Kali was popularly worshipped even by the non-Hindus. Thus popularity of ‘Sakti cult’ mostly emanated from factors and circumstances which had little to do with any religious teachings. Even now these are not absolutely flawless from the point of view of ethics. Rapid changes in the method of worship can be observed in different regions and in some cases it can hardly be identified whether at all it has got any religious basis. The priestly classes in ancient days were hardly free from traditional vices and so what they propagated had not unoften little moral or religious value.

Faith in the magical concept of the mother Goddess grew largely by rustic-illogical-rural way of belief. Those who belonged to this school

of thoughts were clever enough to put the influence of the mother Goddess before the prospective followers—in most cases they took help of suggestion through dreams. Obviously they considered those dreams, if at all, more or less as a part of heavenly providence.

Publicity ran like wild fire to popularise the mother Goddess amongst the people who thought it to be wise to believe. Persons who propagated the idea never sat content with mere nominal publicity. To make a more effective impression, they made the images of 'Kali' in different forms and thus gave birth to various worshippers practising varying rites, and mother Goddess 'Kali' got different names—'Ekjota', 'Dhakshina Kali', 'Raksha Kali', 'Sasan Kali', 'Bhadra Kali', 'Dakate Kali', 'Anna Kali', 'Tara', 'Chhinnamasta' and 'Dhumabati' and thus worship continued in different forms and religious customs which were not always in conformity to the concept of Hindu religion. We shall have to examine how popularly beliefs were expressed in different ways in conformity to the socio religious condition of times.

While analysing the worship of 'Dakate Kali' it should be borne in mind that the motive behind the whole effort was to gain some divine influence and to exert it in anti-social activities. According to ancient belief worshippers use to exercise hypnotic influences and by doing so often they succeeded in their campaign of plunder and molestation. Induced by rural prejudices some of the devotees were crazy enough to practice man slaughter (Narabali) with an expectation to tame the turbulent river when there were bridges to construct in some part of East Bengal.\* There is historical evidence that such a type of 'Kali' worship was largely organised by 'Birangana Rani Raibaghini', about eight hundred years ago. Other than common ingredients e.g. 'Ganga Jal', new cloth, fruits, flowers, sandal, vermillion, conch-shells, cowrie and copper metal, different pictures of other Gods and Goddesses were placed in order before the alter. Practice of this type of image worship indicated a wild urge to satisfy irrational desires. As regards the worship of 'Sasan Kali' we could hold no better ideas other than traditional rural beliefs. Besides the common ingredients like rice, fruits and sweets, the practice of sacrificing goats and sheep before the alter of Goddess were common items in the worship. Magical belief encouraged the priest to heal diseases of the villagers by some local herbs and indigenous medicines. Priests used to get the idea of distributing medicines through dreams from the mother Goddess.

Life of man in any society is easy to describe but it is difficult to define. With the growth of civilisation it changes. Basically no religion changes its colour. What we observe as behavioural changes are nothing

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\* Now in the Eastern Pakistan.



more than common rites and traditional performances which are gradually relayed from the present to future societies. Since we cannot separate our life from religion it will be equally unthinkable if we attempt to segregate our activities from the entire set up of religious life. Attempts to win our objectives in social life will necessarily be inadequate if our grievance stem from an idealized view of society. Worship to God never became so popular to man till some motives of gain were introduced.

Careful observation will explain how behind the worship of the mother 'Goddess Kali', lay the very mundane motives of wordly gain and safety worldly dangers. Necessarily those worshippers depicted the mother Goddesses in different names having various functions. How of all Gods and Goddesses 'Kali' was described as possessing such terrific power was more than anybody could reasonably explain or speculate. Problems which seemed apparently beyond solution by any human effort were mostly thrown before 'Kali' to dispose of. Village chiefs mostly from the ecclesiastical community, thought it would be wise to divide the functions of 'Kali' under different headings with different names. They eagerly bent upon assigning different functions to the Kalis with various names.

Perhaps it would be quite relevant to state our conclusion in the form of a direct proposition while worshipping the mother Goddess 'Kali', the devotees had gone one step backward in their traditional quest of religious faith. Facts will substantiate our view. We know how the people fell to worshipping 'Rakhaha Kali' when they were sacred by epidemics. Taboos and superstitions seem to be the guiding forces of men who are anxious to cool the wrath of natural forces. Similar instances could be cited if we would analyse the activities of dacoits while they worshipped the 'Dakate Kali' in order to succeed in their predatory ventures. Despite the rapid growth of civilization, people in their day to day life, could not outgrow some inborn tendencies which found expression in their conception of a monstrous mother Goddess who is out on destruction and can be appeased by prayers and offerings. This is not religion, but a safety valve for men's fear and love of aggrandizement.

Sacrifices of various kinds before the alter of mother Goddess did not always originate in a desire to placate the wrath or to win the boon of the worshipped Goddess. While the worship of the Goddess 'Kali' was intended to drive out all evil forces, 'Kali' was depicted as a superior force who had been capable of maintaining the harmony in religious life. The sacrifice before the alter of the mother Goddess 'Kali' was a significant manifestation of popular belief in religious performances. It had yet another meaning too. The hope of gaining exceptional vigour was another motive force behind the sacrifice of men, animals and vegetable—at the alter of the Goddess. How far such methods really helped them

to approach the Kingdom of God or to live a really noble life is another matter.

Worship of the 'Tantric's with the help of dead people or virgins was a typical example of 'Sakti cult'. None of these worships was observed in isolation in a hermitage. Ordinarily they worshipped the mother Goddess which was popularly known as 'Sasan Kahi'. Sacrifice of life, either human or animal, in the worship of the mother Goddess was nothing better than uncivilized belief. Even then this has been so popular simply because it responds to the irrational instincts of men.

Unfortunately magical power attained through the worship of the mother Goddess did not help to produce the true religious outlook. Interested people with the help of ignorant rural folk gained situational advantages in the name of worship. The murderous practice of 'Satee' had an abrupt end, but not so the 'Sakti cult' which in spite of gruesome performances is bringing in some form or other. This is because it is more attuned to man's superstitious fancies and his fear of the unknown. \*

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\* This paper was read in the 37th Session of the Indian Science Congress at Kharagpur, 1969.

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## REVIEW OF BOOK

THE GAMES OF CHILDREN, THEIR ORIGIN AND HISTORY, by Henry Bett. London, Methuen & Co., 1929 reprint by Singing Tree Press, Detroit, Michigan, 1968 p. 181.

The book under review is not merely an addition to a plethora of books on children game but is a useful contribution to the study of an important aspect of folklore. Publication of books on varied aspects of folklore is a great need of the day. It is more so in the case of reprint of folklore books because folklore movement, with a new philosophy and outlook, has recently started in the different parts of the world where old thoughts and ideas are necessary to know. Thus the republication of the book under review is a most well-come one.

The book deals with (1) Weddings and Funerals, (2) Springtime and Verdure, (3) Sunshine and Fire, (4) Fairies and Goblins and (5) Foundations and Sacrifices with an introduction. While detailing the scope the author of the book says that "The kind of reception given to my book on *Nursery Rhymes and Tales*, both by the press and public, has encouraged me to write the present study of a kindred subject, which was casually touched upon the earlier volume

When I have preferred a conjecture of my own as to the origin of a game I have been careful to give sufficient evidence in corroboration, that the reader may judge for himself as to the validity of the explanation.

As before, whenever a foreign rhyme is quoted, I have given a doggeral translation of it, for the benefit of the general reader and specially of children, who are usually much interested in the subject, as I have frequently observed".

The book is valuable in gaining a deeper understanding of the operations of various children games. The book however lacks illustrations but is reasonably well written. There are different such games which are prevalent in different parts of India and the folklore scholars and workers of the respective zones of the country may try to compile book on folk games on this or a better model taking incentive from the book under review.

Shubnarayan Kabiraj

## BOOKS RECEIVED

FRACHIN PURBABANGA GITIKA, by Kshitish Moulik, Foreword, Dr. S. K. Chatterjee, Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay Calcutta-42 Price Library Rs. 15.00 cheap. Rs. 10.00.

A STUDY OF THE TECHNOLOGY OF SOME OF THE IMPORTANT TRADITIONAL CRAFTS IN ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL INDIA, by M. K. Pal, Indian Publications, Calcutta-1 Price Rs. 5.00

## EDITORIAL

It is well-known that except for the tribals in the north and north-eastern region which have been living in comparative isolation till recently most of the tribals in other areas of India are involved in a continuous economic and social process with their neighbouring communities. They have been trying to identify themselves with surrounding regional societies both in the matter of social affiliation and cultural pursuits. It may, therefore, be appreciated that the attempt on the part of the tribals to identify with the regional culture or society in effect implied their affiliation with Hindu social order and cultural pattern.

Anyhow tribal community who had political power in the past such as Gonds, sometime managed to get themselves affiliated in the caste orientated Hindu Social order as Kshatriyas or Rajputs, while the other satisfied to get even the low Sudra status. There were also some conversion to Christianity in certain areas as a result of the activities of Christian Missionaries certain tribal of the central and north eastern India have come to the Christians fold. The social and political trends among the tribes of north east region have taken a somewhat different course. Though they were numerically not so strong as the tribals in the central India yet their number is not insignificant. Ethnoculturally, they are having somewhat marked socio cultural distance with the non tribal communities in neighbouring areas and unlike some of the tribes in other zones, they almost universally speak in their own tribal dialects. Most of them till recently lived in isolation and the main streams of Indian history and Indian tradition have, therefore, limited significance to them which we know from a number of socio biological scholars. And now a violent agitation being carried out by certain section the tribals for attaining a sovereign State viz. Nagas, Mizos etc. and in keeping with the tone of these tribal people there has recently been established Meghalaya, a so to say, tribal state, in and with Assam. When we respect the decision of the Government of India for forming yet a new state as Meghalaya, we like to warn them not to encourage such organisations in future, if it is mindful of the unity of the country. It should be the duty of the Government to enthuse nationalism to all its nationals irrespective of tribes or non tribes where they can consider the recommendations of the scholars who have shown with factual data that there are some correlations between cultural and demographic characteristics of the tribal and non tribal communities and socio-political trends among the different groups of the tribal people. If the Government cannot tackle them with proper perspective and desired understanding the growing separatist movement of the tribals and non-tribals will make India break into pieces.

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SUDHIBHUSAN BHATTACHARYA

## ROLE OF MUSIC IN SOCIETY AND CULTURE

A well known French philosopher of the 18th century exclaimed that 'man is born free but everywhere he is in chains.' Viewed from a different angle man does not appear to be born so free, for we find him to take his birth very much under the bondage of heredity and environment. By 'bondage of heredity' I mean that man is actually born as bundle of genes and chromosomes which go to determine his limbs and other hereditary features. By 'bondage of environment' I mean that man is usually born in a society where by virtue of his birth in it he automatically owns the customs, manners, language, music and other items of culture of that society. He can not easily escape them. Language, music and other items of his culture represent his social behaviour. He can often be distinguished from members of other social groups from his peculiar language, music and other such things.

Our main object in this paper is to stress the close relationship between music and society and culture. The social and cultural aspects of music are apparent, and yet very much concealed from our sight perhaps due to our modern, sophisticated and telescopic approach to music. According to this view, music is solely an entertainer, that is to say an object of art and aesthetics and nothing else. By music we generally understand an art which the professionals can only perform properly. Music seldom confronts people belonging to high cultures and urban societies in their daily life except in connexion with the radio, cinema and other forms of amusement. This view sadly overlooks the other roles played by music in our society and culture.

If we sojourn for a while from the urban to a rural society and examine the folk-culture of that region, we shall start feeling that music instead of being solely an entertainer, has a much bigger and more important part to play than is usually thought of. A typical village life is

saturated with music. It will be found there that most of the ceremonies and festivals, and also many food gathering activities like sewing, weeding, etc. are attended with specific folk songs and dances. The village folk can understand from the tunes of the songs and the patterns of the dances the occasion for the music. If we collect and analyse these tunes and patterns we will also understand the technique of this music and be able to distinguish them from one another. They can also throw much important light on the history of the development of Indian culture.

Apart from this close relationship between the musical and cultural patterns, music can also differentiate between one social group and another. Some songs, i.e. the tunes of the songs, are meant for women, some are for men, a different set of music may also be there for the children of the given community for study. Some musicologists like Sachs and others, are of the view that different races of mankind have different patterns of music. We may find even among our neighbours that the different types of music owned by them sometimes vary concomitantly with the difference in the castes, religious beliefs, vocations and other social factors characterising the singers.

The community of people we call 'tribes' can also be distinguished easily from their different patterns of songs and dances. The different tribes of Bastar may be cited as an example of this community based musical diversity. A Muria and a Maria of Bastar are more diversified in their musical patterns than in their dialects. In many parts of India caste oriented musical patterns are also available. The cattle songs called '*badhnar gan*' have a peculiar tune which was originally the property of the Mahatos of Bihar, but is now being adopted by other communities in a wide area in West Bengal and Bihar. Mapping out such isoglosses is another duty of the ethnomusicological workers, apart from their finding out the distinguishing features of the different musical patterns which are typical of different groups based on sex, age, status, creed, profession and other social factors.

The traditional method for the study of music is to study the history and structure of the sophisticated forms of music of a country. The main aim of this type of music is to produce pleasure. But that music has also other functions to perform is generally overlooked. Music, like language, is a good instrument for obtaining social cohesion. Human society can not exist without some form of music. Like all other social institutions music depends fully upon social usage and acceptance. But few social institutions are so universal and so ancient in human society as music. The universal elements in music is therefore another item that an ethnomusicological worker would be eager to study.

The ethnomusicologists are social scientists. They would say that every form of music, be it classical, folk or tribal, aims at producing plea

sure. No form of music can survive unless it can please the audience. But what is pleasing to you may not be pleasing to me. A comparison with language is worthwhile also here. My language has meaning for me and not for speakers of other languages. They may therefore consider my language inferior, contrary to my wish. But that does not make my language actually inferior. The lovers of Classical Indian music should not miss this point. A couple of years ago I went to study the language of the Jarwas, a hostile tribe of the Andamans, three of whom were kept confined in the Cellular Jail at Port Blair. I took some best specimens of Classical Indian music on tape for trying on them in order to establish rapport with those unhappy captives. We started with Bismillah's *sehnai* on the tape recorder, and followed it up with specimens of flute, *sitar* and *sarod*, but nothing could produce any impact on the three Jarwa young men who kept all the time their heads low with drooping spirit. But when we played back a few specimens of the music of the Onges who are a neighbouring tribe of the Jarwas in the Andaman Islands, the captives suddenly became attentive and so much interested in the whole affair that they started singing. This gave us an opportunity of tape recording their music. When the tapes containing the newly recorded music was played back to the Jarwas, we found them happy and jubilant. Technically speaking, this Jarwa music is tritonic monolinear and expressed in asymmetrical rhythm. Most of us might find this type of music dull, monotonous and a trifle. But the Jarwas would find their music full of semanticity, although Bismillah's *sehnai* was flat, insipid and meaningless to them.

This leads us to another point which the social scientists would like emphasise in their study of music. They would say that music is not only an entertainer, but also an item of communication where it belongs to the category of 'language'. There was a time in the primitive age when our language was not very much developed. Music, and to some extent also painting, did in those days compete with language as modes of human expression. As a matter of fact, music was considered at that time to be a much more effective means of communication which had a sway also over the gods. Tagore in one of his well known Bengali songs stressed this point: he refers to the Almighty when he says:

"Who Thou are that is standing on the other bank of my songs :  
My tune can reach Thy feet, but I (i.e. the language of the poet)  
can not touch Thee"

The Vedic sages who had a combination of the philosophical and scientific wisdom in them, earnestly believed that if the Vedic *mantras* can be sung with proper tunes and accent, the all powerful gods can be won to give us everything we want.

This ancient belief appears to be the main force behind our festival songs, agricultural songs, war songs, illness songs and other such musical activities which aim at the successful completion of the work at hand by the grace of god. A note of warning must be sounded at this place. We should not put much value on the wordings of these songs. The language in such songs is immaterial. It has been found in many such cases that the songs are full of nonsense words or mutilated or obsolete expressions whose meaning is not clear to the singers or other villagers of the area. It is the tune of the songs that is more important. Music here is a true rival to language as a mode of expression.

This type of music has another peculiarity. It is uncultivated. We have already mentioned that this type of music is a part of our social behaviour, and reflects the different shades of our culture. It is therefore bound to be different from sophisticated music which is actually meant for the classes. But the other type of music is meant for the masses. It should therefore be simple in its structure. While the Classical music needs careful individual coaching and long practice, the other type of music, like our mother tongue, is automatically learnt by our actual participation from childhood. To use an anthropological terms, we are 'encultured' into this music.

We therefore prefer to classify Indian music under two broad heads. They are, cultivated music and uncultivated music. The former is mainly represented by our Classical music, while the uncultivated music is mainly represented in India by two sub-types, namely, folk music and tribal music. Let me quote here a few lines from my book, *Ethnomusicology and India*\* where I have compared these three categories of Indian music :

"The primitive music (i.e. tribal music) is confined mostly to distinct culture groups called 'tribes' who can be distinguished from one another from their music. But folk music, generally speaking, is not characteristic of any particular culture group, and is often current over a culture area where it is practised by different groups. The names of some of the Classical modes, e.g. Saindhavi, Malavi, Gaudi, Saurashtra, Karnati, Puravi, Bihari, etc. also indicate that these melodies were originally current in the regions and culture areas indicated by those geographical names. But when they were modified and promoted to Classical modes they became current in a much wider area. The primitive music of the Indian tribes is more or less a conventional art, and its understanding and appreciation are mainly confined to particular culture groups. Compared to this the communicability of Indian folk

\* *Ethnomusicology and India* by Sudhubhushan Bhattacharya, Calcutta, Indian Publications, 1967

music is much greater. The Classical Indian music, on the other hand, is current over a much bigger area. People speaking different Indian languages, living in different and distant places in India and professing different religious beliefs can sit together, understand and appreciate Classical Indian music. We can at best divide India into two culture zones, North India and South India so far as her classical music is concerned. The cultivated music of India is a product of high cultures. Folk-music in this respect occupies an intermediary position between primitive music and cultivated music. Folk music is the music of the social groups that are part of higher cultures, but are not themselves musically literate. Folk songs in India and elsewhere are composed anonymously and passed from singer to singer by oral tradition. Here folk-music resembles tribal music. The main difference between them in this respect is that folk-music is found in a culture that has also a cultivated music which usually influences its style. But primitive music belongs to simple and unsophisticated cultures that have no writing, and are not directly associated with any high culture."

It will be seen that I have used tribal music and classical music of India as two extreme types. But various groups of people have been living in India side by side from early times. Such polarities are therefore not possible in different types of Indian music, which is also a pointer to the fact that watertight compartments are also not possible in our Indian society and culture. In my book I have tried to substantiate this suggestion of a link between the tribal and the classical music of India. A major argument in our favour lies in the fact that ancient writers like Dattila, Bharata and Matanga have mentioned many Classical modes of Indian music which bear the names of ancient Indian tribes. For example, Andhri is the name of a Musical mode mentioned by Dattila and Bharata. Andh is the name of a Scheduled tribe of modern India living in the states of Andhra, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh whose population is about 61,733 souls according to the Census of 1961. Matanga, the author of *Brihaddeshi* mentions also Saka, Votta, Abhri, Gurjari, Kulindi, Pulindi and Dravidi gitis, all of which bear names of different ancient Indian tribes. Later writers on Indian classical music added Savari, Kora and Gondkiri to this list.

A careful reading of the early and later Vedic literature will convince us that in ancient India the Aryan and the pre-Aryan tribes were more or less on the same level so far as their material culture was concerned, if not in their philosophical and military wisdom. Some sections of the pre-Aryan tribes clung to their traditional life and lived in isolated areas, shunning the Aryan invaders and their dominating culture. But many of them joined hands with the progressive forces of the time. The occurrence of the names of many non-Aryan tribes in the sacred enclosure

of the Classical Indian music shows unmistakably the motley nature of Indian culture.

Another major argument in our favour lies in the fact that an overlapping tendency is still to be found in the music of the Indian tribes who are now gradually coming out of their forest isolations and getting mixed up in the main stream of the country. By analysing their economic and spiritual life, their material culture, language and music, we have classified the modern Indian tribes into three groups, not very rigid ones of course. These three groups are, primitive tribes, semi-tribes and semi castes. Let me quote again a few lines from my book to show the characteristic features of the music of the three classes of Indian tribes mentioned above. Music of the primitive Indian tribes is predominantly ditonic, tritonic or tetratonic. It is composed mostly of a single musical line, and the rhythm in this music is predominantly asymmetrical, i.e. without any regular rhythm or *tala* (or *alap* of Classical Indian music). This music is also mostly ritualistic or functional, and the types are in most cases confined to particular tribes or culture groups. In the music of the semi tribes the scales are predominantly tritonic or tetratonic, additional lines are occasionally introduced, and asymmetrical and symmetrical rhythm are both favoured. The musical types are still confined to particular tribes, although traces of overlapping are found among the central Indian tribes. Functional music predominates, though traces of non functional music are also found. In the music of the third group of tribes whom we have called the semi castes, the influence of the regional folk music is clearly perceptible. Tetratonic and pentatonic tunes predominate. The symmetrical rhythm with the common times, scales of 3 and 4 *matras* are predominant. The music is often multilinear. These musical types are not necessarily confined to particular tribes or groups. Functional music is still prominent in the semi caste music although the non functional variety is now gradually becoming more and more popular in it. Greater use of meaningful words and literary ideas is another peculiarity of the music of this third group of tribes" (p. 6)

The predominant element in the Classical music of India is its artistry. It is therefore to a large extent individualistic. But the other type of Indian music we have discussed above is congregational in nature. The picture of our society and culture is more reflected in this latter type of music.

Classical music is a great leveller, which does not encourage much difference on the basis of social and cultural groups. It aims at a healthy standardisation of Indian music. But if we carefully follow the development of this Classical music we will find that it has given rise to several offshoots all over India at different times in response to the needs of different social and culture groups. These offshoots, although they try

to imitate the various classical *ragas*, can not be taken as true specimens of the Classical Indian music on account of the various modifications and innovations to be found in each of them. Here lies a very rich field in India awaiting the arrival of the research workers on Indian music. We shall conclude this paper by mentioning a few of those group-based mixed musical styles that appeared in Bengal during the last one thousand years.

We start this history with Jayadeva, the celebrated author of *Gita-govinda*, whom, if the tradition is to be belived, we must consider as a true representative of the Classical style of Indian music. His songs on Radha Krishna lila, or the divine sports of Radha and Krishna, had a great impact on Vidyapati of Mithila and Chandidas of Bengal, both of whom lived in the 15th century. Both Vidyapati and Chandidas wrote Vaishnava lyrics which were sung in purely classical style. We may surmise it from the elaborate mention of *ragas* and *talas* in the old Bengali manuscripts containing these songs. But the musical theories which they followed are not known to us. In the 17th century a new type of music named *pala kirtan* was innovated by the Bengal Vaishnavas to popularise the Vaishnava faith in Bengal where the *shaktas* (i.e. the devotees of the mother dieties) were more numerous. Elaborate treatment of this new musical type is found in the Bengali Vaishnava literature of the 17th century.

This type is primarily based on *raga music*, although it is congregational in its performance. Moreover it showed a greater dependence on the story element, and also on the poetical elements of the songs. This *pala kirtan* of the Bengal Vaishnavas introduced many new musical embellishments which are typical of the Bengal style of Kirtan, and is unknown to the Classical style of Indian music. This kirtan style is again influenced to some extent by the *mangal gan* style of music current in Bengal from the 16th century. The techniques of the *mangal geet* and *pala-kirtan* of Bengal are different in many respects. For example, according to the theoreticians of pala-kirtan, mangal-gan is *visama-dhrupa* (or mixed refrain type), and the pala-kirtan is *sama dhrupa* (or common-refrain type).

In the eighteenth century Bengal witnessed a larger number of group-oriented musical styles. The pala-kirtan and mangal geet styles of the previous age continued. At the same time many new styles also emerged to cope with the new social and cultural trends of the new age. Thus, Ramprasad, the celebrated poet and singer of this century catered to the need of the more devout section among the Shaktas. Another poet-musician, Ramnidhi Gupta, appeared on the scene who composed many secular Bengali songs to introduce the *tappa*-style of Classical music. These songs became very popular among the Bangaleese who were lovers



of Classical Indian music at that time. This century also witnessed a new form of Bengali folk music called *Kabi-gan* which was in the form of question and answer, and was noted for its secular overtones. Dasarathi Ray was another powerful poet composer of this century who created the *Panchali* style of music in which a combination was made of the mangal-geet and pala-kirtan style. Dhap kirtan was another offshoot of the kirtan style of this age.

All these styles of music continued to flourish in the 19th century. This was the age when the western culture was making a progressive impact on the educated Bengalee. Raja Rammohan was the leader of this new movement. He introduced a new style of music called *Brahma-sangeet* in the prayer meetings of his new faith, Brahma Dharma. This music was technically based on a pure form of the Classical style, but imitated the spirit of the Church music. Rabindranath Tagore in his early days wrote many songs for being sung as devotional prayers of the Brahmas. But in the 20th century, Tagore music appeared in a plethora of delicate forms having a peculiar Tagorian stamp in all of them. This music emerged as the most suitable expression of the over sensitive Bengali intellectuals of our time. In this brief survey of Bengali music of the last one thousand years I have omitted many important items of Bengali music, as for example the *bhatiyali* and *sari* tunes of the boatmen, or the religious music of the Baul and other sects, which are important forms of Bengali folk music.

The pure Classical style of North India flourished in Bengal among a very restricted audience, and was mainly patronised by the nobility. In the second half of the 19th century, Bankim Chandra Chatterji, the famous scholar novelist, Ramdas Sen and a few other writers and thinkers made a serious attempt through their substandard writings to make the growing section of educated Bengalee interested in Classical Indian music.

Ethnomusicology is a new branch of knowledge which has given a new dimension to musical research. I have discussed here a few of the problems in which the social scientist will be interested in his study of Indian music. I shall once again stress the need of more fieldwork and research in these directions. India offers a rich and virgin field for such studies. Systematic investigations in this new field must be taken up before the interesting musical diversities of this old land of ours are totally replaced by the standard forms of sophisticated music, and also by the cinema songs.\*

*Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla*

\* Paper read before the Seminar on "Science and Music" organised by the Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi

## A STUDY OF THE FOLKSONGS OF THE NICOBARESE OF CAR NICOBAR ISLAND

There are good number of folksongs, folk-tales and myths of the Car Nicobarese which can be even now heard from the oldest people of the island. In the myths and folk tales heard in the tribal villages of the country is enshrined in a poetic and imaginative garb of the philosophy of these simple folks. "How the world evolved" is the most common myth-motif. Every tribe has several myths, often mutually contradictory about its origin. In these myths gods and men live together in an amoral world. But there are types of myths, the sole function of which is to compel obedience to social custom by pointing out how so and so was punished by supernatural powers for such and such offence. The world of vegetation, the animal kingdom, and man's dependence on these usually are the subject matter for many myths, legends folk songs, ritual and folktales. Folklore is frankly imaginative and more entertaining than awe-inspiring. In fact, the main function appears to be entertainment. The Car Nicobarese have rich folk-songs legends, and folk tales. One of the myths about the origin of Car Nicobarese runs as follows. Once upon a time there was a great flood in this land and the whole surface of it was covered with water, one man, however, was fortunate enough to swim to a big tree which was not entirely submerged in the water. He climbed on the tree and tied himself up in the branches of it until the water were assuaged. Whenever he saw any coconuts come floating his way in the water, or any pigs and fowls (with distended stomach) he would swim out to them and bring them in and eat them up in the branches of the tree.

"At last the rain stopped and then little water decreased and he got a little more room and at last he was able to get down to the solid earth.

"Then when the water was assuaged he spiked at bitch hitched up among the branches of a tree. Its ears being spiked by the great thorn of the Kun-liol e.g. the thorny palm. He went to it and released it and took it with him and made it his wife; and they lived together, the bitch and the man, and they had offsprings which was human."

The people of these parts are in the habit of the wearing the *kisat* (i.e. very scanty loin cloth) copy the dog, for it has tail like a dog's tail, and also the band they wear round their head, has ears pricked up like dog's ears. They say too that they are children (descendants) of that dog.

(bitch).<sup>1</sup> A similar myth about their origin is described by N. K. Shyamchoudhuri.<sup>2</sup> "It is said that a Burmese Princess who was exiled from the kingdom by her father for her unnatural connection with a dog came upon Car Nicobar in a small canoe born adrift by the wind. But before the first child was born, she killed the dog to remove the cause of her sin so that the child might not know of it. When the son was grown up she married him as her husband and raised the first family in the island."<sup>3</sup>

Much of the folk stories have been written in all previous Census Reports and in Whitehead's "IN THE NICOBAR ISLAND". All the folk stories are related to :

- (i) The history of the girl in the moon.
- (ii) The story of the great fish.
- (iii) A domestic tragedy.
- (iv) The discovery of Chowra.
- (v) Bats.
- (vi) The origin of the moon.
- (vii) The story of the magician
- (viii) The origin of sharks.
- (ix) The man who came back

The present writer has collected a number of Car Nicobarese folk songs from different villages of Car Nicobar during his field investigation sometime in 1969. Both the Nicobarese version as well as English version of the songs have been written by the Nicobarese themselves in the presence of the writer. But the inner meaning of each of the songs have been written by the writer himself with consultation of the Nicobarese

## SONGS

### 1. Tin-kok-ngo-yiu-an-Ta-ko :

Yong, yong, yong, yong kum riom.  
 Nya-ma Mu-ngo, aya-ma tal-nyun.  
 Hong ton hok in i-ho too-lo-ro mi-nyam  
 Ot sa yik ma mi-si, yik an Ta-ko.  
 Ma-ha-kon ngo-kuo ta loo-ko, yin yih to-ka-nent  
 Ka-val-ngen e! ka-val-ngo ngih kim-rio mo hi.  
 Ton ngaich on no sol-rgo-room.

1 Census of India (A & N Island) 1921 Vol. II P-47 (Story written by G Whitehead).

2 N. K. Shyamchaudhuri - Bulletin of the Department of Anthropology—Vol. IV No. 1, 1955 P. 3.

3 A similar story was also recorded in Census of India, 1951, Vol. XVII—P. 52.

No ho-men-ki-yo no i pa-ram hol hi ;  
 Young ra-na-mo-lon hi, poi menk-kuo hoo i pa nam hot-bi  
 Oi to-hek-ngor-vo mun no ra-na-no lon.  
 Poi meuk-kus hoo i pa-nam hot hi.

### **Song about the people of Ta-ko village (English Version)**

Big, Big, crowd of dancers  
     who eat unripe pandanas and pappayas !  
 We are willing party to dance  
     Like the old man of old Ta ko village  
 Who blocked the paths when canoes came  
     Throw away, throw away our dances  
 For we have reached utmost part  
     to show our dances to other countries  
 Now we are happy to meet people from other Islands  
     There lies no better joy than  
 When we meet friends in their own countries.

### **2. Tin-koo-ko-ti-neu-cho :**

Mah-hol-chu, mah-hol-chu  
     Ta-a-toi tench  
 Oi-i-sun chuok ti tench, meh en-to-ra-he-ta yong ?  
     A-ne-o-re chu-o, tench ta-o-ko re chu-o  
 El-mai, pok-ngo ta-rench  
     Pong of nga-ti chuck-ti mym nu-si yik yom chu  
 Loh-ten no no no no lu mo-re  
     Tom to-heng-tit ta-hol kum che he kuo  
 Ngam to-kin-roo-tu-vo lang to kni lon chu.  
     A-tol to-ma-ro-ngo, rang-chon.  
 Sa-nap to-kuk to-kak

### **Song of the Planters : (English Version)**

Hallo friend ! Hallo friend !  
     Let us go to plant our plantation  
 You lazy father, where shall we go to plant ?  
     If I plant my coconut tree in the sea, it will be downed  
 For my forefathers of old did not plants in such '  
     For, they hung round their necks,  
 A pair of fork and spoons that remained  
     They have left a mark behind them,  
 To chose the trees with huge branches and nuts

**Song No. 3 :**

Ik he ngith panam no a yol  
Ik he-hi ol oi nyis  
Yih-ka yik yong hi to yik an so-ne-nyo  
Ma-hu-vah ko op re yik no i sam-pu  
Ngaich ha-put-tu vo cha-a  
To nuk ta-choi nong in sa fel  
Lu-po el-mat ngaich to ta nisyo  
No in sa nup to-ko en fel  
El-kun op ngaich ok-ku-voiny no ha toh-lo ngo  
No m-lol-ngo yik ta-rik an nok-tol-tin.

**Song About the People of Chowra (English Version)**

When the world was young  
When we were not in this world  
Our fore-fathers were visited by the people Chowra  
They were here for selling their canoes to  
Car Nicorbarese  
But, cheated them with wooden knives  
Which were painted with charcoal fine  
As an imitation for the real knives  
Soon cooked pandanas was put to canoe for send  
As a revenge to afflict the people of Nok-tol-tin.

**Song No. 4 :**

Tin-kno-ko-ngr-noko-ngam chi-ngent  
Young at ni kak it oi hong pong-nye ngam chi  
ngent ye no ngo ko  
Po- nyin no ngenk tu-vo top tu-lan  
Ngaich to-lonre ot chi nge-tu vo  
Vi ngo-re nota-lu-ngi yip nyio yen ha-ro-li-ye  
Vo ko re pu-yo so. pong Mo ta-ko-ngo-yip ra-lo  
No ha-ve-ko ngan chi-ngent  
Hok-ten o no ku vav lo-ngo top tu-lan

**Song of a Man—Transformed into a Python—(English Version)**

How ignorant are we! when the moon is eclipsed  
For the moon is said to be swallowed by a python  
If it's swallowed—we will have no moon  
The hollow piece of canoes are beaten  
With the slogans of vomitting it out  
For driving the python away from swallowing  
For the pregnant women are to take bath.

### **Song No. 5 :**

Tin-kok-ngo tot-ta-rong :

Ha-u-len ih, ha u len hi in roh, i ho ?

Oi-mol ki-rion, ye hi sin mi si tong ki-sa tu vo

ti to-ta-choi no kuch ngen

To ku chi-yo, Ang tot-rarong

Po-kus-re in-ri rop ngaich ham ko kus ok tit

Yik to-cha-his ri ro kum-riom

Ko-on in ri oi ot nyo, yei tong ven ko

Ka-ta-nis yo yip an pin-sang-lo

#### **Song About Tot-Ta-Rong — (English Version)**

Is it not that we found it out ?

In olden times we were the wearers of loin clothes

And we are performing a dance

This is the wooden sword

That cut tot-ta rang from Little Andaman

Those dancers whose voices were passing away slowly

Left the empty coconut shells after drinking

We in grief picked them up and kissed them

In the memory of our missing ones

It is true that we feel no hungry

If we just smell

The sweet vapour from the pot of the women

Of the Pin-sang-lo

### **Song No. 6 :**

Tin-kok-ngo-ka-eah-ten :

Ka-lah-ten hi on kak-kak to-nga muh

Ing he ngam mai no ta hot tako

Poi-yen nup kak to-lon chu-no ngaich

Ton meuk mi-ne sa keok chin no ki-teuk-ko re

Hol-chu, ke roi-choon mau ku-roh

Kum-ngo-re ti-to t-hok roi ta-o-ko

Hok-ngen chu-o chu-o Ku-hiol kinyon

Rato mi-mo ta-ma-tu ngaich el-mai

Chu-ri-ngo mi-no roi ta-o-ko m re

Li-po ti tang mi-no ta ma-tu

Hon-nup-kak no-ot lok-nyo el ka toh-e

Suk-tom kin-yan, kin tuk-ngam mai

oi-yen ta-ko nun mi-ne-kak

Poh-to ngaich chuh pa-ti-re

Hoin sum, ngaich hut, oi ra-mo-low.

### **Song About Catching Fish—(English Version)**

Let us try and catch some fish now  
While the sea is at its lowest tide  
As I think that fish are plenty  
For I could see the sea-stork flying about  
My friend, go and get some leaves  
And bring some dried coconut leaves  
Let myself scrape some poisoning fruits  
Put down the fishing traps into the sea  
Be set up around the coconut leaves  
Surrounding the traps firmly with leaves  
That fish may not escape from beneath  
Let us go back to our homes  
That we may boil and happily have some soup !

### **Song No. 7 :**

Tin-kok-ngo-Si-li look lo .  
Si li look-lo nu kah-lon oi kan yio  
To-ra-nch-lo hi  
Ton ha man pin cha kong chou  
Nup ka-ma-po he  
Ti-ro uk ha-oi no lin-hus-lo nya-an lwore  
Oh hon oh-ko pon nyat to ull ka lan re yo.

### **Song On Insects—(English version)**

How did you come to know  
At one beginning  
The insects that string us  
Gather the sweet flowers juice  
They put out barks of trees  
To make a good smell of their food  
They would not fail  
Because they are shuttered by the spring of calm spells

### **Song No. 8 :**

Ra-ayo man min ngaich to chu  
Fok-ngo el chong chm-min  
Ngaich man mun re-a-ya to chu  
Up pom-cho min ot-koo-po-lon  
Ye chu-och ma-ro-vat-chuok  
Chap hot chu-el-lon-re-ti

Hom at vach-ngo-min-to-chu  
 Ngaich chin min, re-ngen meh  
 Lok et-chong, chin min ngaich  
 Koo-po-lon, pom-cho mi-no co chu  
 Po ro-oich ma-ro-vat chuok  
 Ra-a-yo man min ngaich to chu  
 Oich-lok-ngo el ngam mai  
 Ngaich man min ra-a yo to chu  
 Che-he-chon chin o re chu o  
 To or ye-chu och hang pul  
 Op ha-nam ngem mih no pul  
 Ngaich chin min, re-ngen meh

### **Song Of A Lover—(English Version)**

You will be left by me  
 By ship I will leave  
 Now you will be left by me  
 You must remember  
 When I am far away  
 Put me within your heart  
 Unless you may forget me  
 Soon I will leave you  
 Do please remember me  
 Although I am far away  
 You will be left by me  
 I will be leaving you far across the sea  
 I wish I knew a bird  
 With wings to fly with  
 Or else I am a flower  
 The flower you mostly love  
 Soon I will leave you.

### **MEANING**

#### **Song No. 1 :**

Once upon a time there was a village in the east coast. People of the village were afraid of outsiders. So, when they saw a canoe approaching they closed their footpaths by cutting down the branches of trees, so that strangers might not find their way into the village. That fear is now no more. We meet friends now from other places.

#### **Song No. 2 :**

The land is owned here hereditarily by the descendants of the first



land-owner. Unless the landless people are given land where to plant coconut trees ; they will not live. For they cannot plant their trees in the sea.

### **Song No. 3 :**

In olden times when the island of Car Nicobar was young some people from Chowra came there in order to exchange their earthen-pots of different sizes and the canoe in which they had come. Now at that time foreign materials were hard to get. So, instead of real knives, the Car Nicobarese made some false knives out of wood and painted them with charcoal. These they presented to the people of Chowra, who were happy with them, not knowing that these were imitation. They went back to their land in canoes with full of joy. Their voyage took only one night. As soon as they reached home, they examined everything they got from their friends of Car Nicobar and at last they found that the things were correct but the knives were imitation- and that made of wood, painted with charcoal. Soon, they became too much angry and were ready to take revenge on their friends for having cheated them thus. Now most of people of Chowra in those days knew magic. They, in return, made a small canoe with complete masks and eight sails. They put on it a pot contained cooked pandanas. They let it adrift to the shores of Car Nicobar. It drifted on the shore of a village named Nok top-tur, some distance from Kimois village, on the southern coast of the island. One of the Nicobarese found it and took it home where all the family members of the man except a child ate these cooked food. Soon all family members including the man died. The child was sleeping when that thing was being happened. On woke up, the child went to the sea shore, not knowing anything about his father and mother. A man from Kimois saw him, he escorted the child up to his house and found that the parents of the child had already died there. He took the unfortunate boy and the dead bodies to Kimois where he buried the deads with the help of his co-villagers.

### **Song No. 4 :**

Once upon a time a party of women and men went out to their garden to collect their food supply. On their way back, they felt thirsty. One of the men climbed up a tree for plucking a drinking coconut. He cut down the nut and told them to cut it open and drink. Afterwards he told them to proceed home, while he stayed on the tree filled himself with the flowers of palm which turned into fats in his intestines. Last at night he came home in the form of a python snake. He opened out his mouth and put it in between the floor and top of the house. This had

frightened the girls who ran to the door to jump down. At the entrance, the python stood with wide open mouth. The girls after jumping found themselves in the stomach of the python. One of the girls had a knife in her hand with this she pierced open the stomach of the python and cut their way out. Thus the three girls managed to escape. The python finding that there is nothing big enough on the earth to swallow than to climb up to the moon. So, when the moon was sighted in her full form, the python attacked and swallowed it.

#### **Song No. 5 :**

Once upon a time, a man called Tot Ta rong was courting a pretty girl. He tried in many ways to win her but every time, he was rejected. In despair he wanted to take revenge on her. On a festival day, the villagers were invited to perform dances. That night Tat Ta rong made a magic sword out of wood with which he splitted the land into two. The girl to whom he courted, was moving away in that land without knowing that the islands were separated from each other. Next morning they found that they could not find their relations and friends, but they found empty coconut shells were up by the sea. Some of them picked these shells up and kissed them in sorrow. Once little Andaman was a part of Car Nicobar but Tat-Ta rong cut it away as a revenge on the girl who rejected his love. So Car Nicobar was left in the middle, three times lesser in size than Little Andaman. It is called To Ku Chi by the Car Nicobarese e.g. which was cut away. Now the spirit of the pretty girl is transformed into fairy and lives in a place called Pin song lo. She does not use fire for cooking but just lays the leaves of cocoanut around the pot and everything is cooked inside it. If any one passes through that way, he will still feel sweet smell of the red yam and definitely loose his hunger.

#### **Song No. 6 :**

Nearly all the Nicobarese are fond of fishing. There are many ways of fishing such as spearing, poisoning, netting, line and hook, rod and line etc. But poisoning the fish is the earliest method of catching fish. Everybody can catch fish in this method and even weak person may also catch fish according to his requirement as all dead fish will come out over the water due to the effect of poisonous fruits. The material used when poisoning the fish are wooden basket known as traps which are arranger first of all in such a position that way out of the fish may be blocked. When all are blocked the scrapped poison fruits are thrown about within the area according to extension of boundary of the dry cocoanut leaves. When the people think that enough amount of fish are

caught in the traps, the owner of each trap pull out fishes from their respective traps and put them into their basket and return home. After which they prepare fish curry with these fish and all eat it happily.

### **Song No. 7 :**

Some insects which have string live on flower juice and also on sweet smelling barks of tree from which they extract a kind of juice. Though they are small in size, yet they can destroy big tree. Just imagine how battle insects destroy the coconut trees, so also the other types of insects can also destroy other types of trees.

### **Song No. 8 :**

A couple was newly engaged to be married and all of a sudden they parted each other. They boy had to leave his sweet heart to find means for work in a far off land across the sea. Here the boy expresses his deep sorrow of parting with his sweet heart.

### **ANALYSIS :**

Most of the songs are in praise of the objects of their daily lives such as cocoanut trees, methods of fishing etc. Some others have a moral to draw from the legend on which they are based.

Here, Song 1 indicates the presence of a village in the east coast of Car Nicobar (probably Big Lapali as this was claimed as their original village), Song 2 reflects the system inheritance of land (e.g. hereditary); Song 3 tells us the relationship of the Car Nicobarese with those of Chowra; Song 4 tells how a good man transformed into a snake and then moon; Song 5 indicates the relationship of the Car Nicobarese with those of Little Andamanese and how the latter one separated (a geographical and historical point to be considered); Song 6 describes the different methods of fishing practice by the Nicobarese and Song 7 describes the food habit of the various types of insects while Song 8 does not reflect any material items but expresses deep sorrow of parting.

### **SUMMING UP :**

From the above discussions, it is seen that folk songs have been playing an essential role in all the spheres of life of the Car Nicobarese. While preparing any kind of festival these types of folk songs should not be ignored as these are inextricably interwoven with the life and activities of the Car Nicobarese. This sort of study has a special importance in understanding the inter connections among the various spheres of life of the Nicobarese.

## THE SANNYASIS OF GAJAN FESTIVAL

The Gajan festival of Siva and Dharmathakur are almost identical except that in Dharma Gajan the wooden horses (as the carrier of the deity) are indispensable during the nocturnal procession led by the Sannyasis. The reason of identity in regard to the code of conduct and behaviour of Sannyasis on the occasion of Dharma and Siva Gajan can not be answered properly without an extensive research. This much can be said at the moment that there are ample proofs that the Saivaites tried to equate Dharma with Siva, as the backward castes who started Dharma worship had no precise and thorough conception of their deity. However, yet it stands as a problem. Those Sannyasis are called "Bhokta". From the historical point of view, the Gajan of Siva is the oldest. The rituals observed in Dharma Gajan perhaps have been adopted in the later periods from that of Shiva. In the Dharma Purana, Dharma is shown as "Adideva Niranjana", i.e. the Supreme God being the Creator of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara. It is needless to say that this conception is not based on Hindu mythology. It is a mere fancy of the poets of Dharmapurana of the medieval period. There is no disputing the fact that the worship of Siva was established in India long before that of Dharmaraj; though Dharma is the older of the two deities in an entirely other form and conception, than that which we find it now a days. But why Dharma worship is confined to Rarh area only?

The *Bhoktas* come from all castes and tribes. They maintain 'Brata', self restraint, restricted diet. Shaving of hair and pairing of nails are also tabooed for those days. When the Gajan festival is started the *Bhoktas* take bath and wear sacred threads, commonly known as 'Uttaria'. Then they wander from door to door every evening with "Baneswara" on their shoulder. It seems that the *Bhoktas* observe some sort of mourning period like "Asaucha" (impurity). What does it indicate?

The vattern scholar like Jogesh Ch. Roy Vidyanidhi observed that the word Gajan originated from the word "Gaijan" (roaring). The Sannyasis are the bridegroom's party of the marriage festival of Hara and Kali. In Dharma worship the Dharmathakur is given into marriage with Mukti etc. (Vide "Puja Parban" p. 56). It has been observed in a recent field investigation that there are customs of giving marriage of Dharma with Nilabati. A ridiculous example was found in the village Koma (P. S. Suri, Dt. Birbhum) where another Dharmathakur of adjoining village is given in marriage with that of Koma. In another village, 'Mantras' related to Hindu marriage are read out without any observance

of marriage rituals during the performance of this festival. These reveal that there was a custom of Dharma marriage which is now in the way of extinction. In spite of these, we can not draw inference that the *Bhoktas* represent the bridegroom's party of the marriage of Hara and Kali. It is not understood why the bridegroom's party would observe certain restriction of diet and shaving etc. if it is linked with marriage ceremony? Mahamahopadhyaya Haraprasad Shastri tried to prove in an article published in *Bangiya Sahitya Parisat Patrika* that a 'Bratya' section of the Aryans were taken back to their original sect on the last day of the month of 'Chaitra' (April). Since then their descendants have been commemorating the day in this fashion. So the *Bhoktas* observe such customs. Sudhangshu Kr. Roy of Coomarswamy Research Institute, Midnapur, says "Mummified body of Akhenaten probably was brought by sea to Bengal all the way from Egypt in a royal barge up the Arial Kha river. This is evidenced in the Gajan festival when devotees let their hair grow for a month and wear all the mourning garments and behave like sons who have lost their beloved father and carry in procession a wooden effigy covered with fine 'Cheli' cloth and go through streets of the cities and villages throughout the month of Chaitra". (Vide—Prehistoric India and Ancient Egypt—p. 35). He further adds that the mummy had been kept hidden somewhere in the hills of Rajmahal. Manbhum and Santal Parganas on the western fringes of Bengal.

Roy's theory can not be ignored totally. Rajmahal is a vast area, which is in Santals Pargana now. The ancient history of this area is in the dark. This much we can say that this area was inhabited by Austriacs and till to day they have been dwelling in this area a large number with their peculiar beliefs and rituals.

While on research on Dharmathakur, the contributor of this paper collected two rhymes, one from Birbhum and the other from Burdwan, the fragments of which are mentioned here for showing the co relation.

1. "Kathir sandhane jao Santal Pargane"...i.e. Please go to Santal Pargana in quest of sticks.

2. "Santali Parabate ache Korarer gachi"...i.e. The 'Korar' tree is in Santal Pargana.

But what is the reason of going to Santal Pargana in quest of sticks? It can be guessed that the Santal hill has been found in Santal Pargana in the second rhyme. Santali hill is well known to us through "Manasa Mangal Kavya". In fact, there is no existence of this hill. But it is difficult to understand why Santali hill is found in Dharma Gajan. What is the relation? The language of the rhyme is modern except the word 'Santali'. In ancient Egyptian language 'Sa-ta-li' means, the abode of king i.e. Rajmahal. Are not the words suggestive? Many Egyptian words can yet be traced in our Bengali colloquial tongue and the Archaeo-

logical Directorate of W. Bengal had discovered proofs of Egyptian culture from many parts of Bengal such as 'Pandu Rajar Dhibi', 'Deulpota' etc. Besides these, the queer rituals observed by Egyptians with the dead body can yet be compared with the Austrie beliefs and some within us even today. Therefore the theory of commemoration of the death anniversary of some Egyptian Emperor by the *Bhoktas* of Gajan festival can not be ruled out, pending thorough investigation.

The rituals on the occasion of the observance of the death anniversary of Osiris, the corn-god in ancient Egypt bear strong resemblances with those of Dharma Gajan. Like Osiris, "the death of Adonis was annually mourned, to the shrill wailing notes of the flutes, with weeping lamentation and beating of breast but the next day he was believed to come to life again and ascend up to heaven in the presence of his worshippers. The disconsolate believers left behind on earth, shaved their heads as the Egyptians did on the death of the divine bull Apis" (Frazer). We now can compare this rite with the Gajan festival. The "Baneswara" is carried over in a procession to a river or tank for washing with some magic rites which is known as "Daduri Ghata". No doubt this observance has a noteworthy resemblance with that of Egypt. Frazer's view on the Shiva Parvati Brata of Kangra district may also be quoted here for reference: "The marriage of these Indian deities in Spring corresponds to the European ceremonies in which the marriage of the vernal spirits of vegetation is represented by the king and queen of May, the May Bride, Bridegroom of the May and so forth. The throwing of images into the water and the mourning for them, are the equivalents of the European customs of throwing the dead spirit of vegetation."

Now we should try to deduce solution from the rituals related to tabooed diet, purification of soul and so on.

"Among the "Maoris any one who had handled a corpse, helped to convey it to the grave, or touched a dead man's bone was cut off from all intercourse and almost all communication with mankind. He could not enter any house, or come into contact with any person or thing without utterly be deviling them". "The rule which forbides persons who have been in contact with the dead to touch food with their hands would seem to have been universal in Polynesia". "When the Fijians had buried a man alive as they often did, they used at nightfall to make a great uproar by means of bamboos, trumpet shells and so forth, for the purpose of frightening away his ghost best he should attempt to return to his old home". "In Wageia of East Africa three days after his return from the fight the warrior shaves his head. But before he may enter his village he has to hang a live fowl head uppermost, round his neck, then the bird is decapitated and its head left hanging round his neck".

"Among the Natchaz Indians of North America young braves who

had taken their first scalps were obliged to observe certain rules of abstinence for six months. They might not sleep with their wives nor eat flesh". "When a Choctaw had killed an enemy and taken his scalp, he went into mourning for a month during which he might not comb his hair".

"The Indians of Nootka sound prepare themselves for catching whales by observing a fast for a week, during which they ate very little bathed in the water several times a day." "In Mirzapur when the seed of the silk worm is brought into house, the Kol or Bhuiyar puts it in a place which has been carefully plastered with holy cow-dung to bring good luck. From that time the owner must be careful to avoid ceremonial impurity. He must give up cohabitation with his wife; he may not sleep on a bed or shave himself, nor cut his nails, nor anoint himself with oil nor eat food cooked with butter nor tell lies nor do any thing else that he deems wrong"

"The Indians of British Columbia used to separate from his wife for a full month before he sets traps for bears"

"The Esquimaux celebrate a great annual festival in December when the bladders of all the seals, whales, walrus and white bears that have been killed in the year are taken into the assembly house of the village. They remain there for several days and so long as they do so the hunters avoid all intercourse with women, saying that if they failed in that respect the souls of the dead animals would be offended". "When the Kavans have shot one of the dreaded Bornean Panthers... for eight days afterwards they must bathe by day and night" "In Madras the murderer of a cobra deems himself polluted for three days".

Now from these data it can be inferred that the taboo itself is an innovation of the primitive tribal society and that may have originated from hunting, cultivation, death or slaughter.

Sunity Kumar Chatterjee says that the Austries believed in the existence of soul after death that could enter inside the tree, hill or living animals. This belief was taken by the Hundoos and modified to the belief in transmigration of souls. The like ceremonies of *Sradha* offering food to the dead etc. also might have existed within them. (vide Bharat Sanskriti p. 94). The Austries migrated to India long before the Aryans. The curious magic beliefs and rituals maintained by them were adopted by the Aryans and acculturation was done to a great extent. Hence it would not be wrong if one supposes that the '*Asaucha*' observed by the Sannyasis at the Gajan festival is a product of Austrie belief. But what for these Sannyasis observe such mourning and restriction? Is that a commemoration of some dead person or deity? The question remains unsolved.

## MARRIAGE OF TANKS (BUNDH-BIHA): ANALYSIS OF A SOCIAL CUSTOM OF THE KORA

Information on *bundh biha* was collected in the three adjacent villages of Pargannah Barabhum under the jurisdiction of Barabazar Police Station in Purulia District, namely, Ragma, Karmabera and Sankhar.

Before entering into our topic under discussion, it may be useful to introduce the readers briefly to the ethnic background of the Pargannah of Barabhum which is now defunct, was formerly a Bhumi kingdom with tribal chief. It contained a total number of 596 villages covering an area of 634 sq. miles of southern Purulia. The Kora are one among 61 castes living in Barabhum with a population of 2,677 i.e. 1.09% of the total population of the State. The Pargannah is still dominated by the tribal groups mainly, the Bhumi, the Santal and the Mahato (?) from numerical, political points of view as well as in the matter of land holdings.<sup>1</sup> In 1961 census the Kora of West Bengal and Bihar were listed as a member of Scheduled Tribes. Very little is known about the ethnic affiliation of the Kora. The authorities of different census operations since the time of Risley were somewhat perplexed in placing the Kora either in the Tribal or in the Scheduled Caste groups or in the group of caste Hindus. In reality, we find them at present representing an advanced stage towards integration with the Hindu society.

### **Bundh-Biha Ceremony — a case :**

We were told that every newly excavated tank had to be 'married' sooner or later after its construction. It might take three to four years even to negotiate such a function. Until and unless this function is made, the water of a particular tank is not ritually acceptable and such a tank is known as *thubra bundh* or 'unmarried' or 'unconsecrated' tank. The water of it is supposed to be of bad taste and odour and may even cause illness to those who use it. Villagers generally try to avoid using its water. Any ritual functions like purificatory bath in connection with the different rites of passage cannot be done in an 'unmarried' tank. O. concrete example of such a tank in Ragma known as Mudi tank, was cited by the villagers. There is also a strong belief among the Kora, who are mainly concerned with it, that if they are not properly entertained during the 'marriage' function by the owner, the water of that particular tank will surely become muddy and will taste saline. 3

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1. These figures have been given from our sociological survey of this Pargannah made in connection with the Bhumi Project (1957-60) of the Anthropological Survey of India.



case of Nakul Mahato of the village of Ragma was referred to by our Kora informants. The unkind treatment of Nakul Mahato towards the Kora muddi diggers of his tank resulted in spoiling the water of the tank. The villagers try to avoid using its water. Of course, this statement of the Kora is not supported by everyone else. High caste Brahmins of the village do not admit the truth of such queer ideas of the Kora. They are of the opinion that the Kora put up this funny story so that common villagers may not get away from performing such an expensive function.

Well to do villagers, who want to construct a tank, generally prefer to engage Kora Mudis for the purpose. It is a general notion of this area that, whatever obstruction may come in the way of digging up tank, the Kora will not leave it and they will not stop their pick and hoe until they can trace out some perennial source like a natural spring underneath the tank. The Kora are never found to abandon any kind of earthwork midway, which is quite often the case with labourers of other castes.

While excavation work proceeds, the owner provides the workers with one *gail* (pick and mattock), one *kodal* (hoe), one basket and one piece of new cloth to each of the Mudis who are engaged in earthwork. These implements become the property of the Kora after completion of the work. They are paid daily wages, generally in kind, which consists of two seers of paddy or annas twelve in cash.\* It takes about a month's time for six to eight koras to excavate a tank of medium size. Excavation generally starts in the methods of *Phalgun* (Feb. March) and *Chaitra* (March-April) and earthwork continues throughout the month of *Baishak* (April-May) and even upto the first part of *Jaistha* (May-June) if the monsoon starts late.

After excavation, it is customary for the Kora diggers to claim some cash remuneration from the owner to release the sources of the springs by tearing up the sealing of mud and stone (the rate varies from Re. 1/- to 1-25 per spring). The owner generally makes payment on the site.

After the work is over, it is for the owner to choose a convenient date for the performance of the 'marriage' ceremony. It may even take four to five years for an owner to prepare himself for ceremony which may involve a grand feast with meat, fish and drink, the presentation of a cow to the kora, a good number of cloths, bell metal utensils etc. to the Brahmin, kamar and Kora Mudi. The expenses are approximately Rs. 400/- to 500/-. Generally this function is held in the months of

\*This must be a statement of a decade ago. Anna has been a bad coin since long and the same is dislodged by paise. Twelve annas is equivalent to 75 paise. But the rate a such weeker is nowhere less than Re. 1.75 to 2.25 for a male and Re. 1.25 to 1.75 for a female these days - Ed

*Phalgun*, or *Chaitra* or *Baisakh* (Feb.-May) i.e. after harvest, when the agriculturists become temporarily solvent and are free from the routine of agricultural labour.

Details of the function of the tank of Sankar Mahato to Bansbera have been given below. Sankar performed the ritual only last year in the month of *Baisakh*. Though there is no specific sacred date fixed for the function, yet they prefer a full moon day, as happened in this case.

When such a function is to be performed, the owner usually contacts the Malik or caste chiefs of the Kora of this region. Ratan Mudi of the village of Sankhari, the *Majhi* or the supreme chief and Monghu Mudi of Karmabera village, the *Paramanik* of the Kora of this locality are approached for fixing a date for the festival and settling up other matters of importance like presents to be made by the owner, number of invitees from the Kora community, etc. It may be mentioned here that a large number of invitees, generally 30 to 40 from the Kora caste alone, are asked to attend the function. The selection of invitees from the Kora caste solely depends upon the *Majhi* and *Paramanik*. They usually select persons from 5 or 6 villages in the neighbourhood of the tank in question. The Kora labourers who did the digging work for the *tank* are, of course, included in the list of the invitees. It may be mentioned in this connexion that the caste panchayat with Ratan Mudi as the *Majhi* and Monghu Mudi as the *Paramanik* has its jurisdiction in the following eighteen villages in the neighbourhood: Loradih, Sargo, Tilaboni, Karmabera, Bonkati, Sidhagora, Natundi, Kayradih, Nischintapur, Dhadanga, Namsol, Bankadih, Dubrajpur, Guradang, Jhaura, Rajdi, Puiara and Ragma.

The owner also contacts the Brahmin priest and the Kamar (black smith) who have specific ritual duty of planting the *chak khuta*, a post in the middle of the tank. A *kirtan* party (singer of devotional songs) of the Vaishnavas is also often engaged. Well to do people may even contact a party of dancing girls' (*Nacchini*) on such occasion. Besides these, the owner also extends his invitation to his close relatives. Sankar Mahato went through these preliminaries. A priest from the degraded section of Panrey Brahmin caste of Palma Gosaindi was asked to officiate the function. He did the *Hom Yajna* (sacred fire) as an offering to the gods. It is a rite of greater Hindu tradition for *bundh pratistha*. Abhoy Kamar of Ragma performed the rite of planting a post (this is a local custom or tradition). Sankar also invited a *kirtan* party, comprising of the Gosains of Gosaindi for an all night performance.

In the ceremony arranged by Sankar Mahato, about a hundred persons were invited, including forty to forty five Kora Mudi of Sankhari, Ragma, Karmabera, Bansbera, Amagora, Bankati villages, five members of the lineage of Abhoy Kamar of Ragma, three relatives of the Brahmin

priest, ten to twelve *kirtan*-party members and twenty five to thirty relatives of the owner himself.

The invitees started coming to the embankment of the tank from the afternoon. It may be mentioned here that except for the wives of Sankar Mahato and Ratan Mudi, no other woman was allowed to attend the function. At about 7 P.M. in the evening, the function of *bundh pratistha* was started with the Brahmin priest engaging himself in *Hom-Yajna* on the embankment of the tank itself. Both Sankar Mahato and his wife, who had fasted on that day, sat by the side of the priest and listened to the Sanskrit incantations. The loud utterance of Sanskrit *mantras* accompanied by the pouring of *ghee* or clarified butter in the fire place of *Yajna* from time to time during the entire period of this ritual created a solemn atmosphere. This function lasted for an hour. The Brahmin priest got one new piece of cloth, a metal plate, glass and water jug or *lota* of bell metal a song with flattened rice, molasses for tiffin and a cash of Rs. 10/- as fees. After the fire sacrifice was over, the priest and his assistants were given rice, pulse, fish, sweets and water for drinking and cooking. They cooked their meals themselves in one corner of the embankment and took food there, avoiding the touch of others. The priest took his meal in the new plate and glass given to him by the owner.

In another function, Ratan Mudi, the *Laya* or priest of *Mahar puja* started his ritual function. During the period of the *bundh biha* rite, the owner of the tank and his wife are referred to as *Gola* and *Gulin* respectively. In the similar fashion, the *Laya* Ratan and his wife are called by the terms *Majhi* and *Mejhan*. Both of these couples observed fasting on the day of the function. During the performance of *Mahar puja* both the *Gola* and *Gulin* sat side by side on a mat in front of the spot selected for the ritual. The *Mejhan* also sat at the other corner of it. The offerings of sundried rice, flowers, leaves of *bel* tree, vermilion, sandal wood paste, grass blades, incense, sweets etc. were made to *Dharam Deota* by Ratan while he uttered spells in the vernacular. He appealed to the *Dharam* deity not to harm anyone who would use the water of the tank from now onwards. In appeasing the deity, a sheep was sacrificed on the spot by Ratan himself. Before the sacrifice, some leaves, flowers offered to the deity, were given to it and as the sheep started eating them, it was taken as lucky sign by the owner. If the sheep does not eat the same it will be taken as an ill luck of the owner. Acceptance of the offerings by the sheep symbolically means the acceptance of the offering by the deity. After the sacrifice, the blood was sprinkled all over the spot of the *puja* and the blood-stained flowers, leaves etc. were finally thrown into the tank.

After this, the Kora Mudi together with the few a blacksmith participants joined in a grand feast. Ratan gave a portion of the raw meat

from the sacrificed sheep to the Kamar and the rest of the meat was kept reserve for themselves. Other articles for the feast including rice, pulses, salt etc were supplied to them by the owner. The Kora and the Kamar cooked their food separately. In similar way, the Vaishnava singers cooked their own food and took their meals separately. Only the relatives of the owner took meals in his house. A large quantity of rice beer was also given to the Kora and the blacksmith, who spent the major portion of the night in drinking, singing and merry making. The Vaishnava singers also sang a number of devotional songs

Then in the early morning around 5 A.M. the rite of *Gola Gulin chuman* was held. The wife of the eldest son of Sankar was brought to the spot for this function. The *Gulin* wore a new *sari*, a new set of conchshell bangles (*sankha*) and put on red lead (*sindur*) on the forehead from a fresh packet. The margin of her feet was coloured red by *aita*. The *Mejhan* also dressed herself like the *Gulin* but the dressing articles in her case including *sari*, *sankha* were provided by the owner. The *Gola* and *Majhi* were also wore new pieces of cloth and bannans. The *Matu* too got them from the former.

The wife of the eldest son of *Gola* and *Gulin* took a winnowing fan containing the following articles: *jaqar* or an inverted earthenware with a small opening at the top in which a burning lamp was kept, a small quantity of sun dried unboiled rice, vermilion, a few paddy grains, grass blades, flowers, incense, betel leave, a small quantity of dust and dried cow dung powder and sweets. The *Gola* and *Gulin* stood by side on a wooden rectangular seat or *pira* on the embankment of the tank and their eldest son's wife made formal welcome to this couple in the following way. At first she brought the winnowing fan in front of them and moved it around their face three times. At the end of each circumrotary movement, the winnowing fan was lowered to touch the forehead of the couple. She then put a fresh lump of vermilion on the forehead of the *Gulin* and also of the *Mejhan* who was standing quite near her husband. Both the *Gola* and *Matu* followed her in smearing vermilion on the forehead of their respective wives. She finally welcomed the *Gola* and *Gulin* by pressing the betel leaves, warmed by touching the *jaqar*, against both their cheeks. It may be considered as a symbolic re-enactment of the marriage ceremonies of the owners and the Kora *Majhi* through the repetition of such rites like *bar bau chuman* and *sindur dam* quite near to the tank.

Immediately after this, the *Gola* placed one rupee in the water of the tank which the Kora would have to bring out by thorough searching. This they did successfully. If the coin could not be traced out, then again it would mean something unlucky for the owner.

Early in the morning, just at sunrise, Abhoy Kamar and his assistants

performed the ceremony of planting the post or *chok-khuta* rite. They took a large flat stone slab with a perforation and placed it in the centre of the tank. A wooden pole 9' to 10' long was inserted in the perforation of the stone-slab. Abhoy himself fixed an iron trident spearhead or *trisal* on the wooden pole in such a way that a portion of the trident would be visible from the bank. Then he tied one end of a cotton-thread reel with the trident and brought the reel back to the bank by releasing it. Till the completion of other rituals, this thread reel was held in hand by Abhoy who stood high on the embankment.

At about 7 A.M. in the morning the last ritual i.e. *baitarani par* or crossing the tank was performed. It was purely a Kora Mudi affair. A cow was brought to the knee-deep water by Ratan Mudi and he caught hold of the cow at the neck by wiping round it a new piece of cloth and started dragging it from east to west. The *Gola* was then asked to catch the tail of the cow and to follow him in crossing the tank. The relatives of the *Gola* followed them in a line. Other participants also followed them from a distance. This cow along with the new cloth required to tie up the cow were taken away by Ratan Mudi.

Then the journey back to the house of the *Gola* was started around 8 A.M. The *Gola* gave a lead to the procession. He started moving first in the direction of his house. He was found to carry water filled *jhara bara*, an earthen container with multiple pores all round its body, on his head. Through the pores of this vessel, water was found to stream down his body. The entire path covered by him on the way to his home was moistened by this water. A constant supply of water was maintained by the Kora Mudi who took water in additional containers. Abhoy Kamar also accompanied the procession. He went on releasing the thread connected with *chok khuta* or central post upto the house of Sankar Mahato. The Vaishnavas followed and sang devotional songs.

On reaching home, Sankar provided every participants with light refreshments. They were given flattened rice, curd, and molasses. Now Sankar and his wife broke their fast. In addition to this, the Kora Mudi and Kamar were given sufficient rice and the cost of purchasing one goat for making a concluding feast in their own villages. Abhoy Kamar got a piece of cloth and a cash remuneration of ten rupees. Ratan Mudi also received the same amount in addition to what he had already got. A sum of thirty rupees was given to the musicians. They as well as the Brahmin priest and the relatives of Sankar left the place after a mid day feast.

### Discussion :

The Hindu method of tribal absorption is a gradual process. A policy of *laissez faire* was adopted with regard to the tribal cul-

tures, so that they enjoyed a kind of cultural autonomy even when absorbed under Hinduism. Broadly speaking, we may cite the following three major indications as the positive tests for complete assimilation of tribal group within the socio-cultural system of the Hindus. In this matter we may take a lead from the illuminating article of Bose on "The Hindu method of tribal absorption". (Bose 1944) Firstly, by assigning a specified *britti* or economic role in the form of a monopoly and thereby offering them a place within Hindu society. Secondly, by allocating certain specified ritual role to them, and by allowing them to get the ritual services of Brahmin or Vaishnava priests and thereby giving a stable status in the Hindu caste hierarchy. Lastly, by allowing them to live in close proximity with other higher caste Hindus in interpersed manner, in other words, by lifting up the barrier of physical isolation.

Let us visualize the degree of Kora penetration into the Hindu social world in the light of above indications. We shall limit our observations to the affairs of Kora life related to a special social ritual known as *bundh biha* i.e. the ceremony of the marriage of the tank. This may be regarded as its consecration ceremony. It is of interest to note that before the water of a newly excavated tank be used for social rituals, the Kora has to perform this function. The act of assigning such a specified ritual role for generations to the Kora in spite of their relative isolation and very low position in the regional caste hierarchy, has actually prompted us to make a close analysis of detailed procedures of a case study. This analysis is obviously of tentative character, it is of qualitative value rather than quantitative.

As already discussed that the Kora of Barabhum are regarded as the experts in digging tanks, erecting embankments, making road etc. They themselves think earthworkings as their traditional calling *britti*. They are found to grumble over any encroachment on the traditional *britti* by other castes which is happened at present. But it is felt that Kora enjoy some amount of preferences over the earthworkers of other castes. The local people cherish favourable opinion regarding the working habits of the Kora day labourers. There is a general notion in the area that whatever obstruction may come in the way of digging up a tank, the Kora will not leave it and they will not stop their pick and hoe until they can trace out some perennial source like a natural spring underneath the tank. The Kora are never found to abandon any kind of earthwork midway, which is often the case with labourers of other castes. In addition to this, a specific ritual role i.e. *bundh-biha* has been assigned to them by upper castes Hindus in the area which is beyond the reach of the day labourers of other castes. In Barabhum we find that it was at the initiative of the Raja of Barabhum the Kora got the monopoly over *bundh* excavating and other kinds of earthworks. In this connection, they

received a *tamar-pat*<sup>2</sup> carrying the order of the *Raja* about 80 to 100 years from now from the then chief of this estate on the strength of which they had almost monopolized in earthworkings. Thus it is at the initiative of the Hindu *Raja* of Barabhum, the landless Kora labourers got somewhat economic security and thereby they found a place in the Hindu productive system. It is indeed unique for the Kora of Barabhum. The Kora who live in the neighbouring regions do not have this kind of privilege. The above fact lend support to the model of Bose (Bose : 1941). The local people, in their turn, encourage such a landless labourers' class like the Kora to settle over here in order to get their expert manual service in agricultural fields.

It may be mentioned here that the Kora of Barabhum have the access to the services of ritual specialists like the Brahmin priest, Vaishnava preceptors, Barbers, Washerman, Midwife which are found absent in other places, outside Barabhum. In social rank, the higher caste Hindus place the Kora slightly above the group of 'untouchables'. But the Kora themselves consider higher than this. They try to rationalize their evidently low position by inverting the status of the well established and relatively prosperous Hindu groups like the Moira, Gondho Banik and the like.

Hinduism has left its successful impression upon the Kora religious beliefs and rituals. But in the matter of physical isolation the Kora are found to live in partial isolation from the higher caste Hindus. They live together with the Sahis, Bauri, Sikata Hari in the village of Ragma where this study was concentrated.

Thus it is quite apparent that the Kora have been drawn well within the Hindu social system inspite of their partial physical isolation.

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2. Copper plate on which the inscriptions were made and was handed over to the Kora in a caste meeting by Raja Ramkanar Singh Deo Bahadur about one hundred years ago.

## NONGKREM—THE NATIONAL FESTIVAL OF KHASIS

The Nongkrem dance performed at Smit annually for five days in the month of June is the most colourful dance of the Khasis. In grandeur, gaudy and gorgeous display of antique jewellery, it is unparalleled among the aboriginal people of India. No other social event has helped in forging unity among the various sub-tribes as this dance. In fact the birth of Meghalaya owes its origin to this dance.

Socio-cultural contours apart, the *Pomblang Nongkrem* or the *Shad Nongkrem* as it is known among the hillmen of Meghalaya, is the only religious ceremony that has survived the impact of the sledge hammer blows of western civilisation and the missionary influences. But for the Nongkrem dance the Khasi society should have remained at the cross-roads and Meghalaya in the mud air.

The dance is held at a village called Smit, 7 miles south of Shillong, on the Shillong Jowai Road. Smit is the royal residence of the Siem-mother of the Khyrim siemship. Formerly the festival was held at Nongkesb in the suburb of Shillong, which was the original capital of the undivided Shillong siemship. The capital was transferred to Nongkrem following a fire in 1815. The Shillong siemship was partitioned into Khyrim (Shillong) and Milliem siemships in 1859. The performance of the dance at Smit dates back from 1903 A. D. Shillong siemship is the only Mother siemship in the Khasi Hills.

The *Ing sad* or the royal residence of the Siem mother is the building in front of which the dance is performed. *Ing sad* is the embodiment of the traditional Khasi architecture. The seat of the government in the past was at the *Ing sad*. The building serves as the royal residence, a court, an assembly house and a house of worship. The *Ing sad* at Smit consists of five apartments: (1) *Tynkong*, where solemn religious assemblies are held, (2) *Ka Khyiram Blang*, a penfold for sacrificial goats at the Nongkrem festival, (3) *Ka Shlar*, the central dancing floor cum Durbar Hall, (4) *Ing bah*, the boudoir of the *Siem sad*, and (5) *Kyrpong* a sleeping apartment. The *Duwan*, threshold pavement, serves as the altar. Floral designs of zig zag and bead in silver green and yellow colours greet the visitor to the *Ing sad* at the entrance.

The construction, repair and renovation of the *Ing sad* is the responsibility of the community at large. The building raised on piles with poles, rafters and purlins with thatch is sacred in every part. The flooring is made of planks. The central pole (*Rishot Blei*) is called the pillar of divinity. The use of iron nails or any metal is a taboo in the construc-



tion of this building. The *Ing sad* faces towards the rising sun.

The Khasis and Jaintias of the Khasi-Jaintia Hills district of Meghalaya are matriarchal to the core. No other female embodies in herself the matriarchal structure so perfectly as in the *Siem sad*. She is the high priestess of the State, the custodian of the age-old festivals and religious usages. In fact she is the spiritual head of the State. The office of the *Siem sad* in the Khyrim State descends in the line of eldest daughter though in other states the office is the prerogative of the youngest daughter of the deceased incumbent. The Khasi-Jaintia social custom of affine culture does not apply in this particular case. The *Siem sad* is not the wife of the ruling Siem, but his sister. It is her duty to elect a new Siem with the help of the Mynim (ministers) and Lyngdoh (priests) chiefs of her siemship whenever a vacancy is caused. She does not take part in the ritual affairs of the State, but gets all ceremonies performed. The sacrificial animals, equipments and instruments are kept ready by the *Siem sad* before the Nongkrem dance starts.

The proclamation of the dance is done in the typical primitive style. The lucky day having been fixed by the Siem, the *Siem sad*, the Lyngdohs and Mynims, a ring of cane (*kyrwoh*) is sent to the people of every village in the State by way of summons, at the same time telling them of the date of the festival and requesting them to attend the ceremony with their votive offerings which consist of goats and fowls. The number of knots in the cane ring indicates the number of days ahead for the festival. On the eve of the festival drums are beaten and pipes blown at the *Ing sad* in order to proclaim the performances of the sacred rites. State and Central Government offices in Shillong generally observe holiday on the fourth day of the dance.

The five days on which this great festival is held conform to five most important market days in the Khasi Hills at Pamtrah, Umm, fewduh, Lyngka and Pynsing, corresponding Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Religion overweighs in the various solemn functions conducted at Smith. A high priest, *U Soh Blet*, or one having communion with God, is selected from amongst the Lyngdohs. He hails from the Mylhem State. Of course, the Siem is the supreme priest of the State. The *U Soh Blet* is assisted by two deputies.

The festival commences with the beating of drums and blowing of pipes by the *Dhohas* (musicians) on the morning of Wednesday (Pamtrah) till the sun rises. The musical instruments are kept in an apartment called *Kypdang* in the *Ing sad*. The most important ritual performed in the night of the first day is the invocation of the *U Let Shillong*, the founder of the states of Mylhem and Khyrim. The Khasis say that at first they had no clear conception of the God Shillong. The credit for

discovering the identity of the god inhabiting the Peak of Shillong goes to a Khasi called Shillong. He was a man endowed with great insight into mysteries. He found out that the god of the Peak was great and powerful. He offered sacrifices and special rites to the god of the Peak and taught his neighbours the manner in which these rites are to be performed. Still people did not know the name of the god. People called the god *U Lei Shillong* thereby meaning the god of Shillong. The credit for giving the name to the peak as well as to the town, thus, goes to Shillong. The god of Shillong lived with his wife and three children. Two of the daughters transformed themselves into two rivers and are with the Khasis even today, the elders say. Another daughter assumed the form of a fairy. The fairy was of ravishing beauty and made her appearance at a place called Pomlakrai by the side of the Peak and the Umram stream. She was sighted by some cowboys who struck by her grace and charm reported the matter to their elders. The elders rejected the story as a myth. A Khasi youth called U Sati Myllem Ngap of Nongkseh village was enticed by the fairy and he took upon himself the burden of uncreavelling the mystery of the beautiful maiden.

A cave known as *Ka Krem Marai* at Pomlakrai was supposed to be the abode of the fairy. When U Sati reached the Marai cave, the beautiful troglodyte was basking at the entrance. U Sati was struck by her beauty and he implored her to accompany him. She withdrew to the cave and the youngman could not get into the cave as the neck was too narrow. He plucked a bunch of fragrant flowers of the shrub *Tiew jalyn kteng* and offered them to the fairy. U Sati could thus persuade the lady from the cave to come out with the help of flowers. As soon as she emerged from the cave, U Sati caught hold of her and carried her home. This was a great occasion. People of the Nongkseh and the nearby villages flocked to see the fairy and christened her *Ka Pahsyntiew* (*Ka lady Pahsyntiew* – one who has been lured by flowers).

U Sati took paternal care of the young lady and when she was of marriageable age, she was given in marriage to U Kongor Nongjiri of the Bhoi country contiguous to the Khasi land. Their conjugal life was an ideal one. She conducted the affairs with unusual dignity and grace and people, therefore, referred to her as *Ka Siem* (the queen). The Khasi women believe that it was *Ka Pahsyntiew* who taught them dancing. She taught them the virgin dance. Her wisdom and foresight was a byword among the Khasis. *Ka Pahsyntiew* lived with her husband till their children, three in number, grew up. The people of several villages came together and elected the children of *Ka Pahsyntiew* their *Siems* (kings). This is how the Khasis explain the origin of the Shillong Siems.

After propitiating *U Lei Shillong*, *Lei Long Siem* (the ancestress of the Siem-clan) and first maternal uncle of the Siem-clan by offering each

a gourd full of rice beer at the fire-side of the *Iing sad*, the *Soh Blei*, Siem, Myntries and the Bakhras (nobility) take their seats in the *Ka Shlur*. The Hindu divine architect Bṛwakaṃma has his counterpart, *U Biskorom*, in the Khasi mythology and he is worshipped next. A ceremonial dance by the assembled people around the *Rishot Blei* completes the first day's programme.

On Thursday (Umni market day), i.e., the second day of the festival, villagers from different parts of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills cleanse the court yard of the *Iing sad* and the path leading to the sacred grove where a white goat is sacrificed in honour of *U Lei Shllong* on the third day. At night special prayers are offered to *Ka Blei Synshar*, the goddess of justice. The distribution of roasted fish (*kha path*) is an occasion for riotous scenes, and the *Soh Blei* and the various headmen have a tough time in controlling the congregation. Two functions are important on the second day night: the dance led by that of *Soh Blei* and *Lyngdohs* around the *Rishot Blei* to the accompaniment of the music provided by the *Dholias* in which the Siem himself joins his noblemen and the *kha Muhuri*, the sacrifice for the pipe. A cock is sacrificed to the pipe by sprinkling a few grains of rice on the bird. The omens are consulted by a process of divination by taking out the entrails. After this sacrifice the priests and musicians drink a toast to the health of their Siem and the welfare of the people.

On Friday (corresponding to the *Iewduh*, i.e. the market day of Shllong) the functions commence with the ceremonial distribution of costumes by the Siem to the musicians (*Dholias*). The Siem accompanied by the *Soh Blei*, *Lyngdohs*, nobles and the villagers, who dance all the way to the music of drums and pipes, proceed to the sacred grove at the summit of the nearby Lumpombiang hillock. A cock is decapitated to propitiate *U Lei Shllong* and omens consulted before performing the *Masteh*. The *Masteh* consists of sacrificing a spotless white he goat with a single stroke of a short sword (*dah*) in honour of *U Shllong* (the god of Shllong Peak) by the Siem himself. The entrails and seven other important portions are collected, by the *Soh Blei* for examining the augury by the Siem. If the augury is auspicious, a dance is performed by the Siem, his heir apparent, the priests and nobles, followed by the people at large. The congregation return to the *Iing sad* with pomp and pageantry, dancing all the way with the beat of drums and blowing of pipes with an occasional firing of guns. A dance is held at the threshold of the *Iing sad* before entering it. The entrails and other portions of the sacrificed animals are then roasted by the *Dholias* for offering to the departed ancestors at night. The manes are also propitiated by offering rice beer (*kiad um*) at a ceremony called *Ia sut kiad*.

The presentation of he-goats to the Siem by the various village head

men is an important item on the third day night. The *Siem-sad* donates a herd of fine goats (*lang-sla*), accompanied by another attendant herd (*Lang-sqnam*). The presentation of goats is done on roll call basis and each gift is accounted for by marking a stroke or strokes by lime on the wall of the *Khyram Blang*. Except the village of Nongkrem, which discontinued presentation of goats in 1903 following the shifting of the market to Smit, all other villages do not fail to send their tributes in this way.

The hereditary chieftains of the Khasis such as village headmen, Lyngdohs, Basans, *Dholias* and others are given a sumptuous feast at the dead of night after which they perform a dance inside the *ling sad* before the *Rishot Blei*. The Siem joins hand with the nobility on this occasion.

The virgin dance, *Nohkjat*, is the first item on the agenda for the fourth day, Saturday (Lyngka). The female unmarried members of the Siem's family perform the dance in the early hours inside the *ling sad*. The male members of the Siem's family join the dance in a semi circle and the venue shifts to the courtyard of the *ling sad* as soon as the day breaks. A community dance in which males and virgins take part follows by which time it is 10 o'clock.

The Pomblang Nongkrem or the Shad Nongkrem commences now. The priests, twelve in number, headed by the *Soh Blei* take their seats in a row in the courtyard with the sacrificial cock, a gourd full of rice beer, a jar full of water and other necessary materials close at hand. The *Soh Blei* takes the seat in the centre. The Siem of Khyrim and Mythem take their seats behind the *Soh Blei*. The vast concourse of spectators are eager to witness the solemn ceremony. The *Dholias* play their drums till the priests are ready for beginning the sacrifice. A cock is sacrificed by each priest by sanctifying it by besmearing rice beer, rice powder and other materials. This sacrifice is meant for the welfare of the representative houses of the high clans of the State including the Siem's family. Of course the cock sacrificed by the *Soh Blei* goes to the *U Let Shilong*. The entrails of the fowls are removed after sacrifice to examine the augury.

The sacrifice of goats is performed with utmost solemnity. There is pindrop silence at the time of the sacrifice. At first 12 goats are sacrificed under instruction from the *Soh Blei* the inaugural decapitation being done by the *Siem Kynnah* (the youngest nephew of the Siem). The first lot of 12 goats is sacrificed in honour of the ancestors of the Siem and this is followed by another lot of 5 for the welfare of the nobility and the community. The decapitation of each goat is greeted with a gun salute. The animals are beheaded with a single stroke of the *dah*, after anointing them with rice beer, rice powder and other substances required for the ceremony. The entrails, livers etc. are collected for the

first and second herd of goats. Other goats are killed one by one, but their entrails are not collected.

The finale of the fourth day is the Thanks Giving Dance performed by the *Soh Blei*, Myntries, Lyngdohs and other rank and file of the clergy. A community dance follows in which boys and girls dressed in their traditional finery take part. The dance is enlivened by the orchestration of *Dholias*. This dance is performed for seeking the blessings of *U Blei* (God Almighty).

The distribution of the sacrificial meat takes place on the fifth day of the Nongkrem festival, Pynsing (Sunday). The delegates from various villages take this meat to their respective hamlets. At night a solemn Thanks Giving Assembly (*Durbar Nguh Blei*) is held in which the siem and the priests offer their prayers to the Supreme God for the welfare of the siem, his family, members of the community and the nobility of the State. This brings the festival to a fitting finale. God Almighty is praised for bestowing His blessings on the Khasis. His blessings are sought for the perpetuation of the institution of Siemship, maintenance of law, order, justice and righteousness. The siem removes his turban when he offers prayers on this occasion.

The distinguishing characteristic of the Nongkrem, including those dances of lesser importance among the Khasis, is the majesty, grace and royal bearing. People whose eyes are trained in seeing Bhangra, Kathakali and other dances of vigorous steps hardly relish a dance of this slow-pace. The steps are tiny and the movements ambling. There is no quick rhythm in the steps. The dignified bearing of the male dancers, the demured, down cast faces of the bells and the down to earth simplicity will attract the attention of any connoisseur.

The community dance is held in front of the *ling sad*. The dancing floor is called *Lympung sad*. Though all male members of the Khasis without restriction of age are allowed to take part in the community dance, only the virgins among the fair sex are permitted to participate. It is indeed strange that a matriarchal tribe whose women reign supreme observe taboo. Perhaps married women are taken to be ritually unclean. Women dance in the inner circle and men dance around them as if they are protecting them. Women never raise their hands. They simply move their bodies and feet slowly and majestically.

Virgin girls caparison their body with expensive traditional costumes and jewellery. The *Jaunsem*, the cloak of the Khasi ladies which covers the whole body and is fastened at two sides of the body, worn on this occasion is called *Kyrshah Dhara*. This is laid over a grey *mukmur* garment (velvet undergarment) of which the part covering the arms is visible while their skirt *ka jainpien* hangs down towards the feet. Antique ear ornaments such as *wahdong* (pendents) and *Siar Kynthie* or

*kshahshkar* (loopings), *langkyrdeng* (pendent of the top ear) are put on this occasion. A number of bracelets (*kia tad ki mahu*) made of pure gold are worn on the wrists in addition to armlets, the *khadu syrgkha* or the *ike kaoh kti*. The neck is loaded with necklaces of exquisite beauty and workmanship. Silver chains, *ki kynjri tabah*, coral beads (*shan ryndang*) and pearls (*kanupad*) of variegated colour hang from the collar. The hair is plaited at the nape and tassels of golden and silver colours hang down from them. The crown is of excellent workmanship. These jewellerys are the finest specimens of Khasi smithy, the art of which is not practised these days.

The menfolk wave fly-flaps (*u thuia*) and brandish swords while performing the community dance. They keep up a faster pace though there is no violent convulsion of the body. Their mock combat with make-belief clash of swords is interesting. After dancing for some time, two men approach one another at a time and cross their swords in unison and then retire to repeat the same process.

This sword dance is really the *piece de resistance* of the Nongkren festival. The male dancers put on their *ka khor ka khriam* (turban) which is embroidered with reddish yellow and grey threads. The Khasis say that King Laladitya of Kashmir invaded Assam in the middle of the 8th century A. D. and was repulsed by the queens of the Khasis. They are believed to have given one of their princesses to the prince consort of Kashmir and got in return a turban. Turbans are fashioned after this original one. The orthodox animist Khasis use their sleeveless coat (*gymphong*) on this occasion with a *dhoti* which is either *boh khalia* (white) or *boh khor* (embroidered). The necks are loaded with silver chains, pearl necklaces and ornaments made of gold (*kynjri tabah*). Ear-rings (*siar shyurang*) and bracelets (*sah tyrpeng*) are also worn in addition to silver waist belts. The Khasi weapon of arrow with its quiver is hung from the armpit. The scabbard is suspended from the waist. The male dancers with their colourful drapery and dazzling ornaments move majestically in the outer circle. "The attire hidden and costumes bright in dancing ground they melt in light" (*Ka khor ka khriam ka kstar bariek li sei ha ra rong ban shad mastieh*), says a Khasi poet.

The musicians (*Dholias*) are seated on a specially constructed platform when the community dance in the open ground is performed. The important musical instruments used on this occasion are the indigenous pipe (*tangmuri*) and drums (*Nakra* and *Sing Nuala*). The *tangmuri* is a wooden pipe which has got a deep penetrating note. The *Sharati* (used on mournful occasions), *Besh* (cowherd) and other pipes that produce plaintive tunes are not used on this occasion. The *Dholias* never fail to display their skill in producing notes to correspond to the pace of the

dancers. As the dance itself is slow moving, music is subdued and is apparently monotonous.

The Nongkrem dance was originally connected with the propitiation of ancestors and fertility rites. This annual ceremony could not be performed for some years on account of the cleavage among the Khasis under the impact of Christianity. The Siems of Khyrim and Myllem are the coparceners of the Shillong siemship. The Siem of Myllem embraced Christianity during the British period. Some of his subjects also followed suit. The church excommunicated those Christian Khasis who partook in religious festivals such as the Pomblang Nongkrem. The supply of goats was discontinued. The majority of the elite Khasis profess Christianity. An amicable settlement was reached in 1957 when this writer was in the field. The ceremony was revived in the wake of the demand for a separate Hill State.

A new political significance was given to the Nongkrem festival as a realisation dawned upon the Christian Khasis their salvation lies in living in peace and harmony with their animistic brethren forgetting the difference of religious affiliation. Khasi heritage is too precious a cultural trait that needed preservation. The Christian Khasi Siem of Myllem today lends a helping hand to his brother Siem of Khyrim in conducting the rites of Pomblang Nongkrem. He does not hesitate to dance with the Siem of Khyrim. Most of the leaders of the Hill State movement from the Khasi Jaintia Hills area profess Christianity. Indeept they are the protagonists of the solidarity movement among the Khasis, which culminated in the birth of Meghalaya.

The Christian Khasis, when participate in the Nongkrem dance, wear bead necklaces to signify their tribal affinity. There are about 25 Christian Khasis belonging to the I. A. S. and other allied services and some of them, who attend the dance, do not hesitate to take to steps wearing expensive suits with the addition of the traditional turban. The Muslim Khasis also do not consider it against their religion to participate in the dance. Christian churches belonging to various denominations have today reconciled themselves to the changed stance of their followers.

It appears to me that the Nongkrem festival originated as a great fertility rite. The sacrifice of a number of he goats is performed for bringing prosperity to crops. "The goddess on this occasion may be regarded as a Khasi Demeter, although no mysteries form part of her services or the Grecian Eleusis." The festival originated as a monsoon festival, but is held today in autumn. The sacrifice of goat is important at Kamakhya, the ancient temple of Assam, not far from the Khasi Hills. Kamakhya is undoubtedly the incarnation of matriarchy: is the metamorphosed Great Mother of the Khasis. The Nongkrem dance is performed from time immemorial when the Khasis were living in the Kamakhya Hills. No other dance has changed the course of the history of a tribe as the Nongkrem dance.

## REVIEW OF BOOK

*BAUL*, Bengali mystic songs from oral traditions, Edited and Introduced by Prithviendra Chakravarty, Papua Pocket Poets, Poet Moresby 1970, p. 28, Price not mentioned

This is book No. 16 of Papua Pockets edited by Uli Beier. It appears that book No. 9 of this series is on Jhumur song. The book under review has a short introduction with 21 Baul songs in English. The editor writes that "Most of these songs selected here were collected in early 50 from Burbhum in West Bengal. Some of these songs have originated in North and East Bengal when the filles were supplied by the translators." He again writes "The original text of 'Strange Art' was collected by Jayasri Chakravarty from a street singer in Asansol around 1918 and the Bengali text is still unpublished." We quote below the English translation for obvious reason :

Where did you learn this strange art :  
To teach – and take away again ?  
But I shall not worry,  
Most of my knowledge was merely picked up

I am not worthy even  
To want anything from you  
What you have given, it is enough,  
It is not right to ask from you.

What you have given me,  
You snatched it away bit by bit  
Then why and for what hidden plan  
Did you leave one or two things with me ?

You have taken away my beauty, you have taken my virtue  
And now your eyes are on my body.  
My understanding, sense, happiness, peace  
All vanish with my strength.

Kangal, who has lost everything,  
Now possesses only mind and heart.  
Why don't you take these two as well ?  
If you do that, I'll be at peace

This is an interesting booklet where the English translation of the Bengali songs seem to be faithful. We are thankful to the Editor and the publisher for their undertaking this type of publications.

Samir Ghosal



## EDITORIAL

Any event or any social or historical change is nothing but a transformation of energy. From the energetic point of view the creation of culture is nothing but a transformation of crude energy into useful energy. The greater the coefficient of useful energy obtained in such a transformation, the greater is the progress of culture. A primitive lamp for example, which transform chemical energy into light energy, gives only fifteen or more per cent of energy. The higher the percentage of useful energy obtained in this way, the better is the adaptation.

Society, as a totality of individuals working together for a common purpose is an arrangement for better utilization and more perfect transformation of crude into useful energy. Where there is no order and no regulations of mutual relations, but a disorderly struggle, there is a useless waste of energy, and perfect transformation is impossible there.

The function of language, law, commerce, trade, production, punishment, state, Govt and other cultural phenomena can be expressed in the same terms. They all facilitate a better utilization of crude energy and prevent its useless waste. In the primitive stranger of culture this purpose was achieved imperfectly, since the methods of its achievement were rude. Science is the most fundamental means of the utilization of energy. For this reason it is the basis of civilization. The social process is a transformation of energy and its redistribution, civilization is nothing but an accumulation of this transformed energy and progress, its better and better utilization. Nevertheless, physical phenomena themselves are nothing but a modification of biological energy which in turn, is a form of physico chemical energy.

Energy has various forms and may be transformed from one to another. Life is a specific form of physico chemical energy. Organism generally and the human organism especially, are embodiment of energy and mechanism for its transformation. If energy had been equal in all individuals the whole drama of human history would not have taken place. Instead there would forever have been dead equilibrium. Again the energy of the young people are quite different from that of energy of the elders. The young energies are getting diversified in this ever changing world, if these energies are directed towards good they will help for reconstructing the country and if they are directed to evil, they will be powerful enough to destroy even what we have been able to construct. It is a matter of great concern that most of young energies are getting direction to destruction than construction. Let the thinking intelligentsia and the administrators sit in a conference with this problem and find out a solution for the benefit of the country as a whole.

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SAMIR K. GHOSH

## MAN, LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY

### I

It is essential to every linguistic conception of language, more of an to the language sociologist, that it designates and precisely characterizes human communication by the attribute of spirit, reason, purpose, good will, consciousness, unity and selfhood. The nature of language is thus thought of by analogy with our human nature of reason and personality. Now all these attributes constitute clear and definite *concepts*: they can be grasped by the intellect; they can be analysed by thought and put to ordered rules and schemata; they even admit definition. An object that can be thought thus conceptually may be termed *rational*. One nature of language (or linguistic expression) is then a 'rational' nature and a system which recognizes and maintains such a view of language is in so far a 'rational' thinking. Only or such terms are beliefs possible in contrast to mere *feelings*. It is false that 'feeling' is all, the name but sound and smoke' (Goethe: *Faust*)—where 'name' stands for conception or thought. At least, it should be admitted that system should have no lack of *conceptions* about language, that it should admit knowledge—the knowledge that comes by intuition and can be quantified and qualified by further (or deeper) experience.

But this brings us to a check point. Here an error may lead us to a one sided interpretation of language. The view that the essence of language can be stated completely or exhaustively in such 'rational' attribution needs a corrective. This is more apparent than real. For spoken language—insofar as it consists of a grammar i.e. word combination and sentence formation rules—purports to convey ideas or concepts in a meaningful way under a social context. This is more clear

and unequivocal with reference to a social frame of reference—and this tends to stress the 'rational' attribute or component of language.

But the above mistake, though a natural one, is misleading. For we know, even in social contexts, ambiguities and indistinctness in language exist, and they may defy a structural and/or semantic explanation in a language. In order to exhaust the idea of language, one is faced with the fact of a non rational or super-rational component of a language. A simple analysis of language or of society does not help us much in this regard. The non-rationals are 'essential' and 'real' attributes of the components. But it is important to note that they are *synthetic* essential attributes. That is to say, we have to predicate them in a subject which they qualify, but which in its deeper essence is not, not indeed can be, comprehended in them; which rather requires comprehension of a different kind. Yet non-rationality can be in some way or other be within our grasp. Even language of insanity or of mystics and or aphasia can be or have been put to a chain of understanding.

This confronts us to a contrast between rationalism and profounder language. Note, however, that rationalisation is not the denial of the unknown (or less known), unpredictable miraculous part of the language, neither its opposite is the affirmation. Even the deviant activities of man can have a stable structure and indeed they are occasional breed from the norm in the causal nexus in nature. Every society sets for its members certain rules (and roles) and symbols to be obeyed and executed—including linguistic codes. In fact, non-rational elements help us to understand the behaviour of rationalism where quantitative difference brings a qualitative change. The language history of a society will amply show examples where the mental attitude and emotional content of the language has changed keeping a par with rational *vs.* non-rational elements. It is a difficult question to answer: whether in our idea about language, the non rational is excluded or superimposed by rational, or in the society the non-rational exceeds (and sets the norm) the rational? To be on the safe side, it can be stated and that the rational acts in the framework of knowledgable rules, whereas the non-rational behaves in a wild (unaccountable) way of which less can be predicted or brought to an order. A dogmatic and doctrinaire theory of rationalism may render the non-rationalism invalid, and thus gives a one sided intellectualistic and rationalistic interpretation of man and his language. Since man to a great extent does not totally give up his non-rational activities, his language also bears the stamp.

A bias to rationalisation may lead (or has led) a student of society to construct or formulate bases or sources of language—thus leading to a labyrinth of one-sidedness. There are, of course, no purely rational

concepts which serve as guidelines in understanding man's language—a concept may differ in *space*, *time* and *motion*, even in individual depending on his state of mind. In the general sphere of man's ideal life, 'natural', 'non-natural' dichotomy, 'apparent' 'real' dichotomy are always relative. Non uniqueness of the components of language, vis-a-vis, non-descriptability is just one side of the coin of the language experience. If there is any uniqueness in the domain of man's activities on which specificity can be ascribed, it is surely man's language experience and its manifestation. An enemy can be the best observer to point out the qualities of the opponent, though in a different way. An advocate of non-rationals may contribute to a functioning of rationalisation. Neither man, nor his language, nor the society in which he lives and functions, is exclusively contained and exhaustively comprised in any series of rational assumptions and assertions. A language sociologist's duty is to explain and elaborate, by *comparison*, *abstraction*, *analysis*, *synthesis* *generalization*, *induction* and *deduction*,—the different elements of man's language in society—to state relation i.e. the social role; so that the nature of language may become more manifest. Linguistics thus becomes a part of sociology and language is thus comparable to other social events or institutions.

## II

A world outlook studying the relation of consciousness to the objective material world can be to a great extent conditioned by the language. The study of the most general laws of movement (motion) and development of nature, society, and consciousness, as it concerns man, is known in the Marxist philosophy as *dialectical materialism*. Language as matter, the basis of man's linguistic world and language consciousness, considered as an attribute of highly organized matter, a function of the brain, a reflection of the objective social world, are the subject of study of a class of social scientist, termed as language sociologists. In a dialectical method, the general interrelation of language objects and phenomena of the social world and the motion and development of the world as resulting from the action of the internal contradictions in the world itself is of paramount importance.

In any scientific enquiry if it means to be systematic and empirical, the first step is to devise some means of identifying and delimiting the data; to state the goal; and to come to some relevant conclusion. The data do not somehow present themselves. They have to be arranged, ordered and analysed. Take an event like, a Bengali youth reciting a love poem to his beloved on a moonlight night in Bengal. This single event might be considered from the viewpoints of psychology (sex atti-



tude and emotion involved), physics (sound propagated), linguistics, (words spoken and meaning/message conveyed), chemistry (neuro-physiological events involving changes taking place between a man and a woman), sociology (socio-cultural set up), and so forth. Taking the same event, each of the disciplines can start with a different datum. This method is termed as abstraction. In natural science, the principles of abstraction are more or less undisputed. But in social sciences, question may be raised what should we count as datum.

In the recognition of the primacy of language matter and derivative-ness of language consciousness lies the core of dialectical thinking. Language matter is not static it changes in time, is uncreatable and indestructible, it is eternal and infinite. A language community may perish, but not its language matter. In the infinite changes of relative properties, forms, functions of the existing matter, the general modes of the existence of language matter as 'motion', 'space' and 'time' remain constant. The linguistic world of man consists of the infinitely various forms of the motion of language matter in space and time.

Language activities of man know no bounds the sky is the limit. These can be manifested in a variety of inexhaustible configurations specially of man's social consciousness and his linguistic relation to the society. But in the linguistic world there is nothing and can be nothing except various properties, manifestations and relations. Language matter unites the relations of the whole picture of the linguistic world. Socio-linguistic processes are not each self enclosed and isolated, as they can all be interconverted. There exists among them a general connection, interdependence and interaction.

Though the general laws of the physical-physiological world can not be applicable in toto or in part to the general laws of the socio-linguistic world, they are subject to general laws they can not escape the action of general laws. There is no language without a grammar there is no society without a structure.

In studying and understanding a language or a society, the knowledge of history or historical development—the transformation and change, is of great importance. Language matter existed before the appearance of language consciousness. But the social mode of the motion of language matter appears with the coming into being of human society (*die menschliche Gesellschaft*), the bearer of which is MAN, who possesses consciousness, in particular, self-consciousness. No other animal can study (or has studied) its own language and society. In this realm, he is a lonely traveller among his fellow animal companions. The evolution and development of human brain into a organized whole is indeed complex. But language consciousness, thinking cannot be separated from language matter, which thinks or helps to think.

The problem of interrelation between language consciousness and language matter is the 'basic problem of linguistic philosophy'—a problem which lies at the heart of a general philosophy. This has attracted the attention of philosophers like Pantanjali, Aristotle, Descartes, Wittgenstein, Weisberger or Noam Chomsky, though there is no unified opinion on this subject.

Dialectical materialism considers consciousness as a function of the brain, a reflection of the objective world. Works of Sechenov and Pavlov show that consciousness is psychological process, a reflex in term of its physiological basis and type of action. This means that consciousness is determined by the natural reality existing outside of, and operating on, the brain. How far holds this assumption good in case of language is a mootpoint. One has to enter here into polemics of the ontological characteristics of consciousness. It has been argued that objects, their properties and relations, being reflection in the brain, exist within form of images, i.e. ideally. The brain, thus, is not the *source* but the *organ* of consciousness, i.e., a part of the human body in which the object acting on is transformed and receives its ideal form of being. The ideal is not a special substance or a side companion of the material processes which take place in the cortex, but the product of the activity of the brain, the subjective reflection of the objective world.

If we do not give up the notion that the society is knowable and expressible through the language, and science actualizes knowledge, developing itself in the direction of a deeper penetration into the laws of being, we arrive at the conclusion that language matter precedes the language consciousness. Of course, a proper knowledge of a society or a language is endless and the possibility of knowledge is limitless. We have not yet exhausted our knowledge say, about English grammar or Ekiopia society.

The process of linguistic knowledge of a society is also endless, so is the possibility of the social knowledge of a language limitless. Knowledge is a reflection of the world in human consciousness, inseparable from the change of the object of knowledge in the course of social practice. This involves the materialistic solution of the question of relation of a thinking to being and recognition of social practice as the basis of the process of knowledge. Social practice consists in the interaction of man and the surrounding world by means of the relations of men (in a society) to one another in the concrete historical condition of social life. The basic aspect of practice, say, language, is the productive activity of man as directed to the reproduction of the material processes of their lives. A language may be extinct without being practised or may be elevated with proper practice. Practice is the basis of the formation and development of knowledge, of all kind, at all its stages, the source of know-

ledge, the basic stimulus and aim of knowledge, the sphere of application of knowledge, the criteria or truth of the results of the process—man and his words are shaped by man and his needs.

Linguistic knowledge and logical thinking begin with the sensory knowledge and its transformed data, and is a product of history. Man, language and society are all in a dynamic process, each exerts influence on other and becomes influenced by the other in turn. Development brings more complex modes of social production, and inclusion of new objects (hitherto unseen) in the process of production and creation of things. The history of man is thus a history of discovery and understanding more new things, properties and relations between man and society. Quantitative changes bring qualitative understanding. And in the course of the historical development of man, language and society, the object as well as subject of perception changes qualitatively.

The process of knowledge of a society or a language beginning with sensation and perception rises then to a level of abstraction—i.e., to a logical thought. But the contact or connection between the surface and deep structure of a society or a language nevertheless proceeds unbroken.

Human thought is a historical phenomenon. The knowledge acquired by a generation is transmitted to another with the possibility of its fixation by means of language and other symbols with which thought is inseparably linked. The world view of an individual in a society is closely conditioned by the world view of the whole of society (if not of mankind in general). Both the thought and the modern man is a product of history; and the specific peculiarities, which he has been able to acquire and hold through the development of social human practice are also a historical phenomenon. The social practice of a modern society is radically different from that of any previous society (though it may carry some traces over); thus the thought based on these levels of practice is significantly different. Thought is also a social phenomenon gained through forms of social relations which are becoming more and more complex. The historical character of human society, human thought, human language, object of knowledge is of paramount importance to a language sociologist in determining its characteristics.

Knowledge of a whole society or a language is a matter of human consciousness and experience. But human consciousness cannot at once and entirely reproduce and exhaust the content of an object. Any theory is historically conditioned and therefore includes not fact but "relative" truth. Human thinking, however, can exist only as thinking of past, present and future generations, and in this sense the possibilities of knowledge is limitless. The truths of the results of human knowledge are confirmed and verified by social practice, which is in substance the final goal of human knowledge and which is the criterion of the

truth of the content of knowledge. But whether in life, or in society, or in language, there is no abstract truth; that truth is always concrete, that any fact of natural and social reality must be approached historically. A language sociologist, over and above being a theoretician, should be interested in the social and linguistic problems in all fields of social life, and in order to solve them, he should take notice of the changes which occur in the distribution of social forces.

The general laws of the development of both the external world and of human consciousness of society and language is a concerned doctrine in the materialistic dialectic. These laws are reflected and fixed in the system of categories—most general, basic concepts and at the same time the essential determinations of the forms of the being and reflection of things; they express the universal forms of generalization of being and knowledge—are independent and constantly developing. The logical course of thought reproduces the movement of the historical process of the knowledge from the direct perception of the properties of things to the knowledge of regular connection, which is arrived at by means of thought. The basis of the development of the categories is human social practice in the process of its historical development. The most abstract categories of thought have earthly roots and in the last instance grow on the ground of social practice and are products of the practical relations of men with the real world through their relations one with another at a specific level of social production, *pari passu*, the history of social experience through ages shows that the categories, which arose on the basis of social practice in the process of its further development suffer changes, are confirmed, enriched and corrected by practice. Consequently, as a result of the development of practice, the categories and concepts are developed as expression of practice.

Though language has evolved keeping pace with the man's evolution, language matter as the category is the premise to the study of all other linguistic categories, which through *motion*, *space* and *time* have assumed various shapes. The dynamic activity of language and society was encountered first by man in his practical activity and knowledge. The knowledge of the properties and forms of dynamic matter results in the concept and representations about space and time. Language matter in fact exists as the infinite variety of forms of its manifestation. Man has to deal with subject matter and phenomena which appear as objects (in its qualitative aspects, on the surface and deep levels) for his action and knowledge.

A foundations of continuing identity is promised by the acceptance of a set of beliefs, i.e. logic of knowledge in its historical process, about language and society, consistent in themselves fitting the social structure and guiding the orderly expression of both growth and

stress. All objects have external aspects apprehended immediately by sensation and perception, and internal aspects, the knowledge of which is acquired immediately by abstract thought. In the deep structure of language and society, all grammar and social phenomena can be generalised and compared in terms of universal categories. But at the surface structure of language and society, in disclosing the qualitative and quantitative determinateness of objects, a language sociologist determines their *difference* and *identity* which make up one of the elementary levels of knowledge. *Quality* of a society or of a language is the specificity of the given object, its awareness comes before the knowledge of quantity.

Language, society, language in society change in *motion, time* and *space*. In fact, "no cultural system—no complex of economy, society, and ideology—is even static; all of its component parts are in constant change. Yet as long as these changes remain within tolerable limits, the overall system persists. If they begin to exceed these limits, however, or if other components are suddenly introduced from outside, the system will be thrown out of kilter. The parts of the system are rendered inconsistent with each other; the system grows incoherent. Men in such a situation are caught perilously between various old solutions to the problem which have suddenly shifted shape and meaning and new solutions to problems they often cannot comprehend. Since incoherence rarely appears all at once, in all parts of the system they may for some time follow now one alternative, now another and contradictory one—but in the end a breach, a major disjuncture will make its appearance somewhere in the system." (Godfrey & Monica Wilson *The Analysis of Social Change*, Cambridge 1945, as presented by Eric Wolf "On peasant rebellions" in *ISSJ*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 1969). The universal ground of the change and development of sociolinguistic objects lies in their interaction (any action is interaction), and in the interaction of those various aspects/phases, within the object which are expressed in contradiction, in the struggle of opposites. This ground is based in the nature of things, and the change and development of objects occur not in consequence of an external push as a unilateral action, but because of interaction and *contradiction*. This is always a question of development in man's consciousness—from lower to higher, from simple to complex, from gross to more refined; development is associated with transition from one qualitative state to another—always a leap forward. This material world of ours with man as a language animal in its center is developing almost every moment of our existence. This process consists of a chain of phenomena—a concatenated link with a beginning and a succession. The being of things is not limited to their existence, that things contain in themselves an unseen, potential, "future being"—

a possibility of further transformation later to be realised as existence and so on.

What exists in nature only as a possibility is transformed by the social and working activity of man into reality. But what possibilities will be brought into reality depend upon the conditions and efforts necessary for realization. A distinction between the surface and deep structure of grammar in case of language, or the relation between the form and content in case of society, their interdependence and interconnection, has given man a better understanding of possible and actual being of things. A proper sociological thinking will be more and more in discovering the deeper connection between them, in generalisation about universals, than going away from them. In fact, language sociologists have made real efforts (a beginning) to discover the nature, status and function of language universals (See, Greenberg (ed.) *Universals of Language*, MIT, 1963) and a lively dialogue between the social scientists and the linguists has already been on the scene. In his daily encounters with similar and different objects and phenomena in society and in nature, man discovers the singular, particular and general signs of things. Not all objects or phenomena have the constantly recurring character, some have seldom occurrence, some are relatively stable, some are volatile. This serves as a basis for the formation of categories of *necessity* and *contingency*. The knowledge of the difference between the necessary and the contingent is the avenue leading to the knowledge of *law*, since necessity is one of the essential characteristics of law. The most general laws of dialectical materialism are; *the transition from quantity to quality, the unity and struggle of opposites, the negation of law negation*. These express the universal forms, the way and the dawning forces of the development of the material world and of its knowledge.

As we have already stated, development from simple to complex, from lowest to highest, from an old qualitative condition to a higher, new quality, is at the same time both a continuous and a discontinuous process. Development is only possible because of contradiction, i.e., because of the springing up of an active interaction, collision, struggle of opposites. Any development is a process directed in a certain way. The law of negation of negation expresses this aspect of negation.

The use of materialism and dialectic in the study of human society is a very important expression of the fundamental principles of **dialectical materialism**, as a total and fully consistent world outlook and method. The expansion, the application of dialectical materialism to the development of *historical materialism*. Dialectical materialism considers that being determines consciousness, that men adapt themselves to know the world and its laws. Historical materialism considers that social being determines social consciousness, that men are adapted to

know society, and the laws of its development. That is why, anthropology--the science for a comprehensive study of man and his works - is a study of "Man in Adaptation". Dialectical materialism considers that the world develops because of its internal contradiction. Historical materialism approaches social phenomena dialectically, disclosing their internal contradictions as the sources of the development of society. Historical materialism cannot be separated from dialectical materialism and is incompatible with any other philosophical theory and method. A change of human social consciousness depends on a change of social being. This consciousness is socially produced function of the human brain, it is the result of the social and labour activity of man, of the conditions of social life.

Language sociology, strictly speaking, is not a philosophy of language. But any scientific study of man, language and society needs philosophical orientation and stand, it cannot avoid the fundamental problems of theory and history of knowledge regarding them, which are surely in the domain of philosophical thinking.

(To be continued)

## OBITUARY

### B. L. Desai

We very much regret to announce the death of Shri B. L. Desai on June 6, 1970 by the heart attack. Late Shri Desai was living in a small village Telangpur on the coast of the Arabian Sea in Surat district of South Gujarat. He was an M.Sc. in Botany. Having passed his M.Sc. Examination he worked as a technical hand in a textile House of South India where he could not adjust for long, he left the job and went straight for Surat district and settled in a small village as a farmer. He had some old acres of land on which he was experimenting as a progressive farmer. He was also connected with social service and local politics. He was the Chairman of Surat District Shikshan Samiti. He will be more remembered as a diligent worker of folklore of Gujarat who had contributed some articles in this journal also. One among his many articles entitled as "Melva: a Rain Invoking Ritual of South Gujarat" appeared in *Folklore*, Vol. III, no (April 1962) first and later was reproduced in the book *Rain in Indian Life and Lore* 1963. Besides "*Folklore*", he has also contributed articles to the *Journal of Gujrat Research Society*, Bombay. We have been informed by his son Manubhai B. Desai that Late Desai collected many folksongs from the remote parts of South Gujarat which he idle for editing and publication. If any organisations undertake the publication of these valuable collections, it would mean the showing of greater respect for the departed soul. Let his soul rest in peace in heaven.

- Pushker Chandervaker

Sanrastra University, Gujarat.

## TWO FOLKTALES OF BENGAL

### 1. Crow and the Sparrow :

Once upon a time there was a crow and a sparrow. The crow was very jealous and wanted to take the flesh of the sparrow.

One day when the sparrow was eating paddy and the crow pepper in the field, the crow said to the sparrow, "Whoever of us will finish eating all the grains of the field will be the winner and the winner will to eat bit of meat from the chest of the other" as the winner's prize. The sparrow thought that it was impossible for the crow to eat all the pepper of the field. And then, "If it can consume so much of pepper, how would it eat the flesh in such a heavy stomach? Definitely it is an idle talk." So the sparrow agreed to the proposal of the crow and they both came to an agreement.

But the crow was very much clever and was eager to eat the meat and flesh of the sparrow. So very quickly he ate one pepper and hid ten and in that way completed the eating of all the pepper of the field. As soon as the crow finished eating, he said to the sparrow of that, and reminded the sparrow of their agreement.

Poor sparrow got surprised and thought that when the agreement was made that must be honoured. And said, "Dear crow, I have a little request you to make. You go to different places and eat different dirty and filthy articles. So you will have to wash your lips before you enter that on my breast for eating my meat."

The crow agreed to it and came to the bank of a river for water. The crow said :

"O river, O river, please give me little water  
I will wash my lips and then  
I will split the breast and will eat the meat of the sparrow."

The river said, "Hallow crow, you consume different dirty and filthy articles through your lips. If you dip your lips in the water all the water of the river will be spoiled. So better bring a small jar and carry water for washing your lips."

But where can the crow get a water-pot? The crow came straight to the house of a potter and asked him the following

"O potter, O potter, please give me a water-vessel  
I will carry water for washing my lips  
And then I will split the breast of the sparrow and eat meat."



The potter replied, "I have no water-pot in stock. If you want a water pot, bring some clay by which I will make a pot for you."

Then the crow went to a field to bring clay. The clay said, "Crow, your lips are dirty—you cannot dig mud with your lips, if you want clay bring a small spade for digging mud."

Getting tired the crow went to a black-smith and said,  
"O black-smith, O black-smith, please give me a small spade  
I will dig mud for the making of a clay-pot  
I will carry water in it for washing my lips  
And then I will split the breast and eat the meat of the sparrow."

The black-smith said, "It is very good. I will manufacture a spade for you. But there is one difficulty. I have no fire. You please bring some fire, I will make a spade for you."

Now, where the crow can get fire? It went hither and thither for the search of fire. On the way it met a dog. The dog advised the crow—"You go to the black-smith again and ask him to make a sickle. Give that sickle to the shepherd, he will cut the grass by that sickle. The cows will eat that cut out grass; as a result they will give more milk. By drinking that milk I will be strengthened. Then I will kill a buffalo. By the horn of that buffalo you will dig the mud and will carry that mud to the potter for making a water vessel."

The crow, however, thought it was not a bad idea. So he went straight to a nearby household and said:

'Oh the master of the house, please give me little fire  
The black smith will manufacture a sickle,  
Your cow boy will cut the grass by that,  
That grass will be devoured by your cows,  
As a result they will give fresh and extra milk  
The extra milk will again be drunk by the dog,  
By which the dog will be so strengthened  
That it will be able to kill a buffalo  
I will take the horn of the dead buffalo and will dig the mud.  
Then I will carry clay to the potter for making a water-pot.  
I will carry water in the pot and will wash my lips.  
I too will be able to split the breast  
I too will be able to split the breast of the sparrow.  
So will be able to eat its meat".

The householder said, "Very good. You take some fire. But how will you take that?"

The crow said, "Please put the fire on my back."

As soon as the master of the house placed fire on the back of the crow, it burnt the crow to ashes.

The hurtful crow got punished by itself red-handed owing to own malice.

Thus my story endeth.

"Why, O Notea thorn, dost thou wither?"

"Why does thy cow on me browse?"

"Why, O cow, dost thou browse?"

"Why does thy neat hard not tend me?"

"Why, O meat-herd, dost not thou tend the cow?"

"Why does thy daughter-in-law not give me rice

"Why, O daughter-in-law, dost not thou give rice

"Why does my child cry?"

"Why, O child, dost thou cry?"

"Why does the ant bite me?"

"Why, O ant, dost thou bite?"

Kot Kot Kot.

## 2. Once upon a time :

Once upon a time there was a king. But he was no ordinary king at all, for he was king of all kings and all lands. His name was Habuchandra. His minister was called Gabuchandra.

Both kept company day and night, and did not leave each other for a moment.

How could injustice prevail in the kingdom ruled by such a pair of prodigies? They were determined to protect the country from harm in every way.

Once the king was touring the country with his minister and others. He was kind to everybody not looking to see who or what kind of a man it was. And so he spoke to an old man. The man had previously been a soldier of his. After a few words, he recognised him.

"My respects to you, old man," the king said.

"My double respects to you, old man," said the minister.

"Thanks to my woman," answered the old man.

"How much money do you get for your work?" asked the minister.

"Six," the old man said.

"How much do you live on?"

"Two."

"And what do you do with the four?" asked the king.

"Yes, yes, that is the right question" said the minister.

"I throw them into the mud," said the old man.

"How many are thirtytwo?" said the king.

"Give a quick answer" said the minister.

"Only twelve," replied the old man.

"Can you fleece sheep," said the minister.

"Can I"! said the old man

The minister was astonished. He could understand not a word of this lingo but all the time he pretended that he has been able to understand the old man thoroughly. The king noticed it and said laughing to the old man

"Until you see my picture, don't you tell anyone"

The king walked on. The minister after him and then the party. Reaching to their resting spot the party immediately began to ask to the king:

"What were the minister, you and the old peasant saying? We could not understand"

The king answered "Guess."

And the minister said, "The conversations were very simple. If you could not understand these you are misfits for the king's company."

The king laughed at this and appreciated his minister

Everybody racked their brains but came up with nothing. Then they hurried back to the old man. They could manage to get the company of the minister. When the king was on a rest the minister came out from his company to the party because he too was not able to follow the old man. Surrounding the old man, they urged him to explain those questions.

"I cannot say anything" the old man said. "Until I see a picture of the king."

"Where? What kind of picture?" the minister asked

"The picture that's minted on the gold pieces"

They agreed to pay him ten gold coins.

Then the old man began interpreting the conversations

"My respects to you, old man", that means my wife is washing my clothes for me. Respectable clothes, so I am respectable. That's why I answered 'Thanks to my woman.'

"But why do you throw money into mud? The four out of six"? asked the minister.

"I earn six coins, I live on two and I spend four on my son. That's like throwing them into the mud."

And what does it mean: "How many are thirty-two--"

"I will tell you for ten more gold pieces".

The party planked down the gold pieces.

"Well, when I was a lad, I had thirty-two teeth, but now I have only twelve—that was the meaning of it", the old man said laughing.

There was only one question left. The party did not begrudge him ten more gold coins.

"And what did it mean: "Can you fleece sheep?"

"That meant what I've just now done to you."

With this remark the minister was annoyed. And he complained to the king to take the life of the old man. The king had much faith on the minister and all the time king relied on him. But for this instance the king showed no favourable response. Although minister's effort to encourage the king in all his works and activities was there. How it acted can be explained in this way that when the king used to laugh loudly, ho ho ho the rejoinder was sure to come from the minister as kho kho kho. Each admired the other's wisdom and was dull of praises of the other.

Now the king had a wall raised round his Audience Hall, his minister kept his nostrils and ears shut by putting a quantity of cotton in them. This was a precaution lest the royal and ministerial wisdom should disappear from the court.

When the king and the minister were seriously thinking as to how they can punish the old man it happened a boar passed near the palace making a sound with its nose. The king saw the animal and said, "What is it minister." The minister looked at it with scrutinizing eyes, and said, "Your Majesty's servants in charge of the stall are thieves. This is an elephant famished and reduced to this size; the servants have not evidently provided it with food."

At once an order was passed to imprison the servants belonging to the royal stall.

After some day the same boar passed by the palace again. The king looked at it and said, "How is it, minister that the elephant has not improved in size though the servants have been punished?"

"The minister said, "Your Majesty, this is a mouse, for were it an elephant, its trunk would have come out by this time. The kingdom is in a great peril. The mice have become fat, feeding on the royal store."

"Does the matter even stand so?" cried the king.

Order was at once passed to behold the sentinels of the royal store.

The royal store was now saved by the sagacity of the king and his minister; they drew a breath of relief and sat in a chamber after this great labour. The servants fanned them in order to remove the weariness caused by the toil of administration. The discrepancy of good or bad and of any action of the king was entirely guided by the wisdom of the minister and in this way the king was going on managing his estates. Yet the king has not taken any step against the old man. When the minister reminded him again of the old man, he immediately

passed an order to arrest the old man but king's men came back in vain, they could not trace the old man.

To honour king's order king's men arrested another old man. Taking advice of the minister, order of the execution of the old man, who was as innocent as you or I, on a charge of misconduct and theft. A stake is raised for the impalement of this criminal. And the king and the minister are present to see to the carrying out of their command. Now the Guru of this unfortunate man came to the spot and cried out, "Do not put him to the stake for god's sake ; let not a criminal be rewarded in the way deserved by saint "

"What is the matter ?" "What is the matter ?" asked the king and his minister gaping mouths.

Now the Guru who was dressed as a hermit said, ' I have found it in the holy writs that the man who is impaled at this most auspicious moment will go to heaven straight, no matter what heinous crime he may have committed in this earth ; so keep his punishment in abeyance for a while, and put me on the stake instead so that I may at once pass from earth to the heaven "

The minister said, ' This cannot be, if this death is so glorious, why should an outsider be rewarded with it ?" Put me there "

But His Majesty whose imagination was inflamed by the description of the nymphs of heaven that he had heard, cried aloud, "The king must go to heaven first "

So by his royal order he was impaled by the executioner and by his wish loud music was kept up all the while drowning his screams, and when the crowd at last saw him, they found him stone dead, with a horrible grimace on his face

The old man thus saved his life by an incident. By saving the life of the innocent man the Guru nodded, and said, "Good-bye to everybody." While going back he said, "After all Habuchandra and Gabuchandra were not the biggest fools on the earth. There are great many fools let them be ; but in no way the administration should be managed by the fools. People should keep watch, or they will allthrough suffer as that of the innocent person who was going to be sacrificed now." The Guru disappeared and here my story endeth. The Notea-thron withereth.

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DEEPAK TYAGI

## **MARRIAGE AMONG THE BHOKSAS**

The present study is based on the field work done during October-November 1963, in the village Bhoksar (Here Bhoksas were numerically predominant) between Ram Nagar and Kashipur in district Nainital.

### **The People :**

Bhoksas have been recognized as one of the important tribes of Northern Uttar Pradesh, inhabiting Tarai and Bhabhar region of tehsil Kashipur of Nainital district. A remarkable thing about Bhoksas has been their neighbourhood and affinity with Tharu who have attracted much of the attention of Anthropologists to a great extent due to certain cultural 'peculiarities'. In fact, the relationship between the two tribes can be emphasised by the fact that it is rather difficult to talk of one without referring to the other. Living in the forest clad malarious region, full of the dangers of wild animals, both the tribes are essentially agriculturists. Particularly, Tharus have won an edge over the Bhoksas in the field of agriculture. Though both of these tribes developed intimate contacts among themselves, Bhoksas have been relatively more open to the outside influences than the Tharus. Tharus were generally avoided by the outsiders on the plea that the Tharu women practice magic. The fear of their magic was responsible for enjoying outside contacts, which was not the case with the Bhoksas.

This region on the whole presented peculiar situation which always restricted the quantum of outside influence. First, being covered with dense forest and full of dangerous wild animals, there was not much activity of the outside people in this region. Moreover continuous malarious condition, extreme heat, and cold and heavy rainfall, were other certain factors that kept the outsiders away from this region. But since last two or three decades the situation has changed to a great extent. Particularly so, since 1947, after the partition of the country, this region came to the rescue of the refugees and displaced persons from various parts of the country and provided them a promise for future. Bhoksas were exposed to the variety of life which found its roots in this region.

Living in small villages along with other Hindu castes, they have

now came to be recognized as part and parcel of Hindu fold. But a keen ethnographer's eye can not escape the well maintained case of their traditional culture, beneath the outward cover of outside influences, particularly Hindu influence.

Ever since the times of Risley the process Hinduization and ultimate amalgamation of tribes in India into Hindu social system has been attracting the attention of Anthropologists. The Bhoksas present one such case in study. Living side by side and surrounded by majority Hindu population, they have tried to maintain their cultural identity to some extent, though the impacts are clearly visible in their social life and they are almost on the verge of losing of their traditional identity.

### **Marital Pattern :**

In the present study, an attempt has been made to study the extent of this impact in their marital pattern, and the data which supports the conclusion is based on the thorough interviewing of the twenty eight Bhoksa families in the Bhoksar village during the period of field work.

Like all societies, Bhoksas also observe certain restrictions in selecting mates. Bhoksa society is divided into a number of clans, and the rule of clan exogamy is strictly observed. It is not considered desirable to arrange marriages within the village. Rule of marrying within the tribe is also strictly observed. Today Bhoksa society has many castes due to the Hindu influences and which are ranked into two categories higher and lower. The main castes are Brahmin, Thakur, Ahir and Nai. Though the marriages among Bhoksas are limited only by the rules of tribal endogamy and clan exogamy. Yet, in practice normally the caste boundaries are not crossed. Both hypergamy and hypogamy marriages are generally avoided and efforts are made to stick to caste boundaries. But there is no rigidity regarding this rule. It is seen that in case of hypergamous marriage when a bride is taken from lower caste the amount of Bride Price is lesser. In turn, if the bride is taken from the higher caste, the Bride Price is heavy. There is one more factor which puts certain limitations on the selection of mate in Bhoksa society. That is, where a marriage within the village is strictly prohibited, generally people prefer to settle marriages in the nearby villages and do not go beyond the physical distance of 20 miles.

Also, in selection of mates, both cross-cousin and parallel cousin marriages are avoided. One of the important features of Bhoksa society is the presence of a well organised 'Village Panchayat.' Infact no marital alliance can take place without the consultation or approval of 'Takhat'--the head of the Panchayat. The fear of excommunication, fine

and feast as a punishment for such an act does not make it possible for any one to avoid the confidence of the Panchayat head. His say of approval has in a way helped Bhoksas to maintain their identity to certain extent in the midst of outside influences which are threatening their cultural and social existence at every step.

Out of twenty eight cases under investigation following details can be mentioned regarding the incidence at various ways of marrying in Bhoksa society. Strongly enough, institution of bride price and Dowry both are prevalent. Out of twenty eight cases, payment of bride price was reported in four cases. The bride price is a matter of mutual settlement and one can fix up any amount in cash or in kind. But commonly, it ranges between Rs. 50/- to Rs. 250/-. In four cases where payment of bride price was reported, the amount paid as bride price were Rs. 50/-, Rs. 60, Rs. 100 -, and Rs. 90/- only. It was reported that payment of bride price can be in kind also in terms of grain, which may range something between 10 to 20 *maunds* of paddy or wheat.

In three cases of marriages, payment of dowry was reported, which also consists of payments in cash and kind, both by the bride's parents, to the parents of bridegroom. In recent years this form is gaining popularity and with the improving economy of the people as the result of outside influence, no limits are imposed on the amount of dowry and the amount actually paid depends upon the elder's bargaining in this respect. Marriage by payment of dowry has come to acquire a prestigious distinction and those indulging in this practice claim a superiority over the others.

Only in one case, evidence of marriage by purchase was found where some more of monetary assistance was given to the bride's family by the other party to meet the expenses of marriage. In two cases mutual exchange of brides between two families was observed. Inquiries revealed that the avoidance of the payment of bride price was the main consideration in resorting to this practice. However, the same question of payment of bride price is avoided by obtaining the services of the bridegroom for sometime and in two cases where this situation was observed both the bridegrooms ultimately became *Ghar jamai* after marriage.

Monogamy is the ideal form of marriage in Bhoksa society. Only in rare cases polygyny is found, though it is not a much approved form of marriage. Incidence of secondary marriages is high and both Levirate and Sororate as the two forms of secondary marriages are prevalent. Divorce is also a common affair. At present the practice is becoming unpopular, and regarded as a disgraceful affair. Normally an engagement can not be broken. The divorce is resorted to only when the girl is a chronic patient, mentally abnormal or of a loose



**character.** Widow remarriage is allowed. But such marriages are not ceremonially solemnised. On any day of dark fortnight—the 'Krishna Paksha', the widow is simply brought to the house of the man with the approval of her husband's family. The practice is known as 'Ghar Baitho' and the type of marriage is known as 'Karau'.

The marriageable age for the boys is between 16 to 20 years and for the girls between 13 to 16 years. In the case of secondary marriages, however, age is no consideration. Normally it is preferred that the girl should be younger than the boy, but in the case of secondary marriage she can be even older or of equal age to her husband.

Selection of mates is the exclusive responsibility of the parents and the relatives. However there are certain persons also who professionally act as the go between and are properly paid by both the parties in cash and in kind for the services rendered by them. They are known as 'Agua' and also act as messengers and carry gifts from one party to the other.

### **Marriage-ceremonies :**

Once the two families agree for marriage, on some auspicious day a priest called 'Thawal' is invited to give the opinion about suitability of the marriage. This is known as 'Jog', of the boy and girl. Approval of the priest is a 'must', without this approval marriages may be solemnised. If the two families are adamant to go without priest, in future the families find it difficult to arrange marriages of their other sons and daughters. After this the girls' family is to confirm the agreement ceremonially, by sending gifts. These gifts consist of one rupee and a few paise, a piece of coal, turmeric, a betel nut, some *durva*-grass and some clothes. These things are sent also with the priest to the bridegroom's house. Priest is from among the Brahmuns of neighbouring Hindu castes. He carries these gifts and ceremonially hands over to the bridegroom after applying *tilak* on the forehead and pronouncing Sanskritic Mantras. This ceremony confirms the marriages and now onwards the preparations start on both the sides. The ceremony is known as Sagai or 'Teeka'.

The next step is the marriage proper or 'Biyah'. Normally marriages are performed on some auspicious days of 'Magh' and 'Phalgun'. About a week before Marriage in both the families, a ceremony is observed which is known as 'Ratijaga'. On this day the entire family keeps awake throughout the night. Particularly the ladies of the family and other ladies invited for the occasion from neighbouring families of the village pass night by singing songs which specially make reference to the Gods and Goddesses, and ancestors of the family. Apart from

this religious aspect this ceremony actually initiates the continuity of ceremonies in the family till the final conclusion of the marriage. With the performance of this ceremony the entire atmosphere in both the families is changed and activity is increased.

The next ceremony to follow this is called 'Tel' ceremony which actually takes place three days before the actual marriage day in both the families. On this day in both the families mustard oil is ceremonially offered to the Gods and Goddesses and then along with turmaric applied on the forehead of the bride and bridegroom in their respective families. From this very day, the bride has to follow a restricted life and is not expected to come out of the house freely in the village. But there are no such restriction for the bridegroom. The oil is applied by the bride's as well as bridegroom's brother's wife who is ceremonially remunerated by giving rupee one and a few paise. This is not an occasion of general feasting. Only those staying with the family and have care to participate in the marriage dine together.

### **Roti :**

On the next day i.e. a day before the marriage is the day of feasting in both the families. All the villagers are cordially invited to participate in the grand feast which is arranged towards the evening. As a matter of fact, this ceremony has involved with it some amount of prestige. There is no doubt, as the name shows, in the good old days the feasting must have been only in the form of Rotis--in a normal way. But today variety and richness of the food have increased. There is no doubt that there is an important function of their economic betterment in making this a prestigious affair and hence a matter of social competition. But we can not deny all the same, that this also reflect the touch of modern air and the twist that large scale borrowing from Hindus has given them simple, cooperative and corporate occasions of con-  
lining.

### **Bar Tayari :**

The following day of Roti is the day of preparation for marriage for the 'Bridegroom's side to make preparations for the 'Barat'. But there are a few important ceremonies which have to be followed. For example while taking the ceremonial bath before preparing for the Barat, the bridegroom's brother-in-law has to initiate it by pouring a tumbler full of water on the head of the boy. The brother-in-law in turn is authorised for some token remuneration for this purpose. After this purificatory bath, the bridegroom puts a specially prepared clothes including Sehra and Pagri which is again the social obligation of

brother-in-law to perform. For this obligation also he gets some remuneration as a token of service performed by him. There is specially prepared Jhalar made of Pannu (shining paper), which is tied around the face of the bridegroom. It is yet another social obligation of the brother-in-law.

The dress of the bridegroom which is a cultural label in a sense, does not speak of anything tribal in it. In all the rites and ceremonies women have dominant role. The entire marriage ceremony has its warfts and roots borrow from Hindu social fabric.

After this initial preparation when the bridegroom is ready for the marriage party, he is carried to a temple outside the village for 'Dev Darshan' or seeing the Goddess 'Chamunda Devi'. From there the marriage party directly leaves for the bride's home. There is a special arrangement of a traditional Palki as among Hindus to carry the bridegroom and other men in bullock carts, and Tongas. The first ceremony after reaching there and settling down at a prearranged place in the bride's village in the *tilak* ceremony by the bride's brother. He comes along with a Hindu *pandit*. He washes bridegroom's hands and feet and applies *tilak* on the forehead. Pandit also has to apply the *tilak* pronouncing Sanskrit *pras*. After his arrangement for refreshments are made. This is again an occasion of showmanship from bride's side. The nature of refreshment is also regarded as an indicator of one's economic status. We have seen in two cases the "Coca Cola" finding its way in such refreshments. Gone are the days when simple Gur and water used to be the only item in such cases. That along with Hindu ceremonies has been borrowed despite economic stresses and strains indicates that how the status consciousness override the capability of a culture to support the alien ways that has started grafting in its milieu. The use of band instead of traditional drum and crackers in the ceremony of 'Darbar' as among Hindus have also added to these economic strains which have become 'a must' as a point of prestige. Like Hindu Brahmins, the bridegroom's party sends silver ornaments, and various clothes as gifts for the bride and this is followed by the Pandit from bride's side coming to the place where the party stays and perform the ceremony of 'Janoo'. Later on bridegroom is taken to the bride's place for the pandal for marriage proper and both have taken seven rounds around the pole called 'Mando' while Pandit recites Mantras. On the next day bride leaves her father's place for her husband's.

Among post-marital ceremonies, Gauna is still of some importance as early marriage still continues to some extent. Because of early marriage in her first visit the bride is not allowed to remain at her husband's place for a longtime. Only three or four days she can stay when certain formalities are over she is brought back to her father's

place. It is only after she attains puberty, may be a year or two or more, that her husband along with his few kins goes to take her—which is called Gauna. But since late marriages are becoming a common affair, this ceremony is losing its importance. This ceremony takes place, as a matter of rule, in the first night of brighter half in Baisakh (May/June).

### **Conclusion :**

The present study thus reveals certain important facts of theoretical interest regarding Bhoksa society. The process of Hinduization and complete assimilation of tribes into Hindu society in some cases is a universal phenomenon in tribal India. As early as in the first decade of 19th century, Kiskey pointed out this phenomenon and discussed four stages of the process ultimately ending in the complete merger of the identity of the tribe within Hindu social system after some time. J. H. Hutton also spoke of this phenomenon in particularly laying stress on the identical nature of Hinduism and tribal Animism when he wrote "Tribal religion in India is the raw material yet to be built up into the temple of Hinduism". However, the process as such is not a simple one and influences which put stresses and strain in certain cases only to be rearranged into a new order, are many sided. There is no doubt that certain basic similarities on religious plane pave the way for social and economic factors to exert their influence, but more important is the internal cultural coherence of the people which provides a challenge to these outside influences and decides the level of acceptance of alien cultural elements.

The study of marriage among Bhoksas clearly reveals that to a great extent they have become a part and parcel of neighbouring Hindu people, but their cultural integrity has been still able to maintain its identity despite challenges on economic front also. The main Hindu ways in their ceremonial stronghold is the important role of Brahmin priest that performs the marriage and dictates ritual aspect. It is quite clear from the foregoing description that Hindu practices are becoming more and more as a matter of prestige. The institution of dowry has become an important feature of Bhoksa marriages whereas the prevalence of the institution of bride price indicates towards the adherence of the tribal people to the traditional system. The prevalence of an identical caste system in Bhoksa, though not with the rules of similar rigidity as among Hindus, regarding marriage is yet another evidence of intrusion of alien influence.

The details of marriage ceremonies show an almost a complete aping of Hindu ways being amalgamated with their own traditional ways

thereby showing a parallel regard for both. The most important force which has still helped maintaining 'Bhoksa' cultural identity to some extent and has not allowed their complete merger with the Hindu social system is the strong 'Village Panchayat' organization which yields authority over them and has not been weakened by the new forces of change. At every step in the social life, their village Panchayat has a greater say, and a common Bhoksa does not dare to flout the authority of the Panchayat due to fear of consequences of excommunication—payment of fines etc. Thus outwardly, though it seems that Bhokas are on the threshold of complete assimilation with Hindus, yet under this superstructure of outside influence they are still strong.

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'Cultural configuration of Ranchi. A Social Survey of a City of Middle India, Bookland Private Ltd., Planning Commission. 1968. Several Chapters of this book deals with the impact of urbanisation on the folk culture, folk dance and folk festivals

WHITLEY, E. H.

'Notes on the Ganwari Dialect of Lohandaga, Chhotanagpur, Calcutta, the Bengal Secretariat Press, 1896. Later on the second edition was published with a changed title 'Notes on Nagpuria Hindi in 1914, 32 p. Contains Grammar, dialogues and songs with English translation, 3 Parts in one volume.

WHITLEY, J. C.

'A Mundari Primer (Calcutta, 1873) Unverified

## BOOK REVIEW

THE ANGAMI NAGAS. by J. H. Hutton, Oxford University Press, 1969, Pp 199, Rs 40 00.

The book under review is second volume of Professor J. H. Hutton's account of the Naga tribes. Here he treated the Angamis who were the most conservative and culturally advanced of all the Nagas. They maintained a stronger resistance to British rule in the early period.

Opening with a general description of the habitat of the tribe in its Hill country, its affinities, and the domestic life in the Angami villages, its houses, hunting, fishing, agriculture, food, games and daily routine, an account is given of their customary laws in an exogamous social system and the position of women. This is followed by an investigation of the religious beliefs and observances, birth, naming, marriage etc. ceremonies, concluding with magic and witchcraft, omens, divination and dreams.

All materials are classified scientifically and especially the tales and traditions are arranged in three groups centred in village feuds, tribal history and its dispersal, together with 'Contes' told for the sake of the story itself. The book provides not merely a description of the administrative institutions of the Angamis or of their socio-cultural religious roles but it tries to trace the history of the political, fiscal, military, administrative and cultural institutions from ancient times to the first part of this century and describes the distinct contributions made by the Angamis for the formation of the Nagaland Government in addition to their social and religious organisations. The book also includes a paper on the *lisu* ceremony for the acquisition of the status in the Kohima village, contributed first to the Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, is reprinted together with a bibliography of the relevant literature and a glossary and index. The re-appearance of the book speaks of its merit and no comment is necessary to indicate the high quality of the book.

The book should be read and re-read by everybody who are interested in folklore, anthropology and tribal problems.

—Samir Ghosal

## BOOKS RECEIVED

**Statistical statements to Annual Report 1968-69 of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission**, Gramodaya, Irla Road, Vile Parle (West) Bombay-56 AS.

**Annual Report : 1968-69 of the Khadi And Village Industries Commission** Gramodaya, Irla Road, Vile Parle (West Bombay-56 As.

## EDITORIAL

According to some criminologists crime, in recent years increased faster than population in Bengal. The Bengalees, it seems, have reason to feel worried about their crime problem. But perhaps the greater danger is that we may be panicked into measures of repression which will do more damage to our system of social values than the crime itself. How a society treats its offenders is an index of its basic attitude towards human personality. The amount of anxiety evoked by crime, and especially violent crime, is such that one is tempted to feel that its roots lie deep. The more serious our crime problem is, the more important it is that we should look at it coolly and rationally. If crime is becoming a real threat, we cannot afford the luxury of indulging our feelings. The first step is obviously to determine how serious the problem really is. Published statistics are available, and they are only really firm source of information on this subject, but they must not be taken at their face value, for they depend to a considerable extent upon the activities of the police. The police are not unresponsive to public pressure, and at times of rising criminality there is a tendency for them to become more severe. The police force is continuously increasing and they now have at their disposal many modern aids, such as forensic laboratories, wireless and fast patrol cars; but modern offenders also keep up to date, and the complexity of life makes it easier for them to avoid detection.

Some anthropologists have pointed out that it is not an age of anxiety and conflict at all, but a period of smooth transition from childhood to adulthood. Current teenaged people feel themselves to be unjustly and sweepingly criticised by a hostile or indifferent adult generation that takes little trouble to understand their problem, and often misinterpret their behaviour to an extent that makes them feel hopeless, frustrated and lead them to crime. Bengalees have a recognized procedure through which young men and women can prepare themselves for adult life, and having proved themselves worthy, acquire at once not only for responsibilities, but also for the rights and prerogatives of the grown-up. Although some teen-agers struggle like a fly to escape from the web in which our society have caught them. To say where they are, would be intolerable: they must move either forwards backwards.

Societies do, of course, evolve and modify their ways of life. The changes we have witnessed since the war towards higher standards of material welfare and greater degree of social and economic equality, seem finally to be realizing many of the hopes of radical social reformers for generations past. The crime problem is very complicated. It should be tackled with all seriousness in the spirit of now or never.

# Books of Indian Publications Folklore Series

1. *Rain In Indian Life & Lore*, An Anthology, edited with an introduction by Sankar Sen Gupta, Foreword : Prof. Nirmalkumar Bose, Director, Anthropological Survey of India, Calcutta, 1963. Rs. 18 (Rare).
2. *Studies in Indian Folk-Culture*, An Anthology, edited by Sankar Sen Gupta and Dr. K. D. Upadhyaya, Calcutta, 1964. Rs. 12.
3. *Souvenir of All India Folklore Conference*, edited by Sankar Sen Gupta, Calcutta, 1964 (out of print).
4. *Folklore Research in India*, Official Proceedings of the All India Folklore Conference, Calcutta, 1964, Ed. by Sankar Sen Gupta, Calcutta, 1964. Rs. 8.
5. *Tree Symbol Worship in India*, An Anthology, edited with an introduction by Sankar Sen Gupta, Foreword P. C. Sen, Chief Minister, W. B., Preface : Sophia Wadia, President, Indian Folklore Society, Calcutta, 1965. Rs. 20.
6. *Folklorists of Bengal*, by Sankar Sen Gupta, Foreword : Hiranmay Banerjee, Vice-chancellor, Rabindra Bharati University, Introduction : Asok Mitra, ICS, Registrar General of India, Calcutta, 1965. Rs. 12. (Rare)
7. *A Guide to Field Study*, An Anthology, edited with an introduction by Sankar Sen Gupta, Foreword : Prof. Niharranjan Ray, 1965. Rs. 16.50.
8. *Folklore Library*, by Dr. P. K. Mahapatra, Dept. of Library Science, University of Calcutta, Foreword : Prof. Niharranjan Ray, Introduction : Sankar Sen Gupta Calcutta, 1965. Rs. 6.50.
9. *500 Questions on the subjects requiring investigation in the social conditions of the people of India*, by Rev. James Long, edited with biobibliographical notes by Dr. Mahadeva Prasad Saha, Asiatic Society, Calcutta, Introduction, Sankar Sen Gupta, Calcutta, 1966. Rs. 10.50.
10. *A Comparative Study of a Bengal Folktale*, by Ralph Troger, Foreword : Sankar Sen Gupta, Indian Folklore Society, Introduction : Prof. Dr. Heinz Mode, Director, Archaeological Inst., Martin Luther University, Halle (Saale), Germany, Calcutta, 1966. Rs. 14.50.
11. *A Bibliography of Indian Folklore and Related Subjects*, by Sankar Sen Gupta with Dr. Shyam Parmar, Calcutta, 1967. Rs. 38.
12. *A Survey of Folklore Study in Bengal : West Bengal and East Pakistan* by Sankar Sen Gupta, Calcutta, 1967. Rs. 20.
13. *Laukik Savdokosh*, (In Bengali—Encyclopaedia of Bengali folk words) by Kaminikumar Ray : Introduction by Prof. Dr. S. K. Chatterjee, National Professor Humanities in India, Calcutta, Rs. 12.50.
14. *Ethno-musicology and India*, by Sudhibhushan Bhattacharyya, Anthropological Survey of India, Calcutta, 1968. Rs. 12.50.
15. *Folklore Museum*, by Dr. Shyamchand Mukherjee, Directorate of Archaeology, W. B. Foreword : Smt. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya, Introduction : Sankar Sen Gupta, Calcutta, 1968. Rs. 10.50.
16. *Women in Indian Folklore*, An Anthology, edited with an introduction by Sankar Sen Gupta, Foreword : Smt. Indira Gandhi, Calcutta, 1969. Rs. 45.00.



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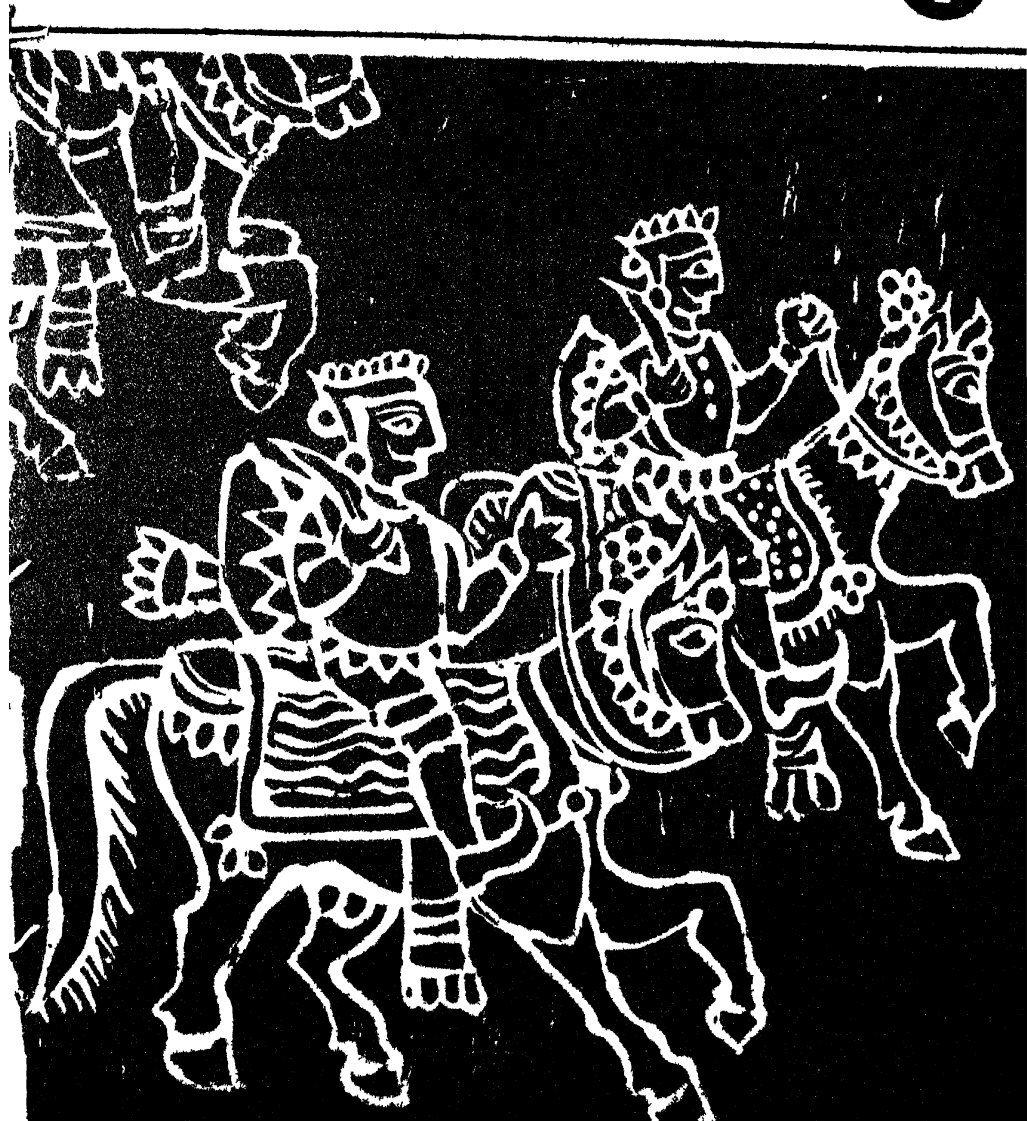
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# FOLKLORE

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AUGUST, 1970 XI, No. 8 WHOLE No 127





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- (a) to collect, record, study and research of the folklore of India which is the solid foundation of our socio-economic civilization;
- (b) to promote and strengthen the cultural and friendly ties between India and abroad;
- (c) to organise folk-arts, folk crafts & photography, folk costume, folk instruments and the type exhibition in Calcutta or any other place within or outside India under the direct supervision of the Society;
- (d) to publicise and otherwise make known the folk-literature, folk-arts & crafts, folk-music & dance and other cultural expressions of India and other countries, and to organise, hold and assist in the organisation of folk-culture gathering, folk-art etc. exhibitions, folk-music and folk-drama performances;
- (e) to organise folk-art museum, folk-literature library and other activities for propagation and advancement of the folk-art movement;
- (f) to arrange and organise tours, visit to places of interest for research work;
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- and (j) to solicit and receive subscriptions and gifts of all kinds, whether absolute or conditional, for the purposes of the Society.

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# FOLKLORE

AUGUST, 1970

VOLUME XI NUMBER 8 WHOLE NUMBER 127

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SAMIR K. GHOSH

## MAN LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY

*(Continued from previous issue)*

A sociology of language, embracing various forms of language and behaviour, language and communication, language and experience, was until very recently unknown (is still unexplored) and indeed was inconceivable as an independent branch of linguistics or sociology. Now this largely developing discipline gets contributions from anthropologists, psychologists, sociologists, political scientists, historians, even educationists; though the major contributions still come from the pen of linguists and social anthropologists. As it stands now, it is still considered a subject taught in the departments of anthropology and linguistics (under various headings of language and culture, linguistic anthropology, ethno-linguistics, sociolinguistics, ethnography of communication, etc.) and is also included in the agenda of anthropological/sociological/linguistic society meetings, specially in the United States. A inter-disciplinary treatment to the field is not yet in the picture, not to speak of its self-standing status. Recent years have seen the publications of quite a few books as well as many individual papers, which convince one that the sociology of language has attracted the attention and won the virtual recognition as a branch of enquiry of the interested scholars. And if one has to mention four names in this connection, the scholars active in the field, one takes the name of Basil Bernstein, Joshua Fishman, John Gumperz, late Dell Hymes and, Uriel Weinreich.

But as an independent science, sociology of language will pose some problems, solution of which is at present not workable. There is the sociology of various forms of language within the related disciplines of literature, anthropology, sociology, psychology, folklore, history, philosophy, and of course, linguistics. This brings us to the shore whether

sociology of language is to be regarded as an independent science or an auxiliary science. Besides, how the sociology of language can be integrated in the social sciences as a whole instead of being allotted as a marginal role, is a moot point.

Since we assume that there is a science of language and of society, there will be a sociology of language. Both linguistics and social sciences, are a discovery and rediscovery of nineteenth century scholars and thinkers, though for a proper perspective in the sociology of language one has to go back to Panini, Aristotle, Descartes, Herder, von Humboldt, Vices and others. A history of sociology of language is yet to be written. But this young discipline in order to survive a fatal death, must develop its tenets and trailways, both tried and untried, theoretical and practical, purely intellectual and empirical, various ways and means to establish its identity. Any systematization may register a voice of criticism and protest, but as a starting point is it worthwhile in trying it. Unlike the physical sciences, social sciences have not yet become the monopoly of any individual or group or institution. Also, it is futile to establish any priority rights, in regard to sociology of language in the process of exploration of depth, in the search for the basic structures of unities and continuities of meaning, in symbolizing the functions.

Sociolinguistics approaches the study of language (*code* and the varieties) via an inductive building up of a series of well described cases by showing the systematic covariance of linguistic and social structure. While sociolinguistics is implicitly comparative, the methods of sociology of language are explicitly, deliberately, and formally, so for here the language sociologists draws together a number of case studies from existing sociolinguistic reports; he seeks correlations or covariations (patterned) in several aspects of language and culture, to test pre-set hypotheses, to formulate new ones, to state general laws. But both are interested to show that "variation or diversity is not in fact 'free', but is correlated with systematic social differences". And both the descriptive sociolinguistics and the formal comparative work of language sociology, so far, are atemporal, i.e., they lack the dimension of time. They have not deal with sequences of social-cultural-linguistic events along the continuum of history, and/or with long-or-short term process of social change and evolution. Both should also be interested in the linguistic aspect of the systems of role differentiation, shared values, ideals and goals, and in controlling and regulating the means men use to attend their ends—the work of sociolinguist and language sociologists may differ in the content and complexity, attitude and interest, emphasis and proneness in the subject matter of their study. Otherwise, the terms sociolinguistics and sociology of language may be interchanged in the literature (though the author prefers the latter).

Sociology of languages has so far been the concern of linguists and anthropologists rather than sociologists proper, who may find it hard in linking the various forms and functions of language and society, the sciences of language and sociology. For a history of the sociology of language one has perhaps go back to the Italian Philosopher of history, Giambattista Vico (1668-1744). He emphasized the importance of language as a useful means to the knowledge of the study of peoples. Incidentally, what Chomsky and his associates have done to Descartes and von Humboldt in re-establishing them and reinterpreting their stands and contributions, we need somebody to rediscover Vico. But sociology of language (sociolinguistics) as it has come to mean for us is a contribution of American scholars who have (and are enriching) enriched the field. Mention should be made of Marcel Cohen's largely bibliographic effort in his *Pour une sociologie du langage* (Paris, 1956), also his article in *Diogene* (juillet 1956). I would like to credit the late Prof. Uriel Weinreich (beginning with his doctoral dissertation) with the publication of his now classic *Languages in Contact* (New York, 1953) for a first contribution to the field. Joyce A. Hertzler's *A Sociology of Language* (New York, 1965) is the first full scale attempt at a text in this area, although it does not integrate recent research or the newer theoretical concepts in sociolinguistics (see Fishman's excellent review in *Language*). Of anthologies on sociolinguistics (linguistic anthropology/sociology of language), Dell Hymes (ed.), *Language in Culture and Society: a Reader in Linguistics and Anthropology* (New York, 1964) still ranks as a first choice. John J. Gumperz and Dell Hymes (eds.), *The Ethnography of Communication* (*American Anthropologist* 66 ; 1. Part II, 1964) contains important papers; so also Joshua A. Fishman *et al.* *Language Loyalty in the United States* (The Hague, 1966). But Fishman (ed.) *Readings in the Sociology of Language* (The Hague, 1968) is the best available collection that can be used as a text book. Joshua Fishman, Charles A. Ferguson and J. Dasgupta (eds.), *Language Problems of the Developing Nations* (New York, 1968) is very suitable for macro linguistics course works and information. William Bright (ed.) *Sociolinguistics* (The Hague, 1966) also contain significant papers. But text book is badly needed, as a serious scholar or a beginning student has still to refer to individual work of Bernstein, Ervin-Tripp, Kloss, Haugen, Labov, Ferguson, Hymes, Gumperz, Fishman, Bright, Slobin, Mackey, Shuy, Lieberman, Weinreich, etc., to name a few. The only good survey I have so far seen is a manuscript on "Sociolinguistics" by Joshua A. Fishman, to appear in a volume edited by Kurt W. Back (forthcoming). Though the articles on theoretical-philosophical-structural-historical-descriptive-applied linguistics have their many journals to get them published, the articles on sociolinguistics (sociology of language) have to knock at the doors of

many different disciplines. May be some day, the *Sociolinguistics Newsletter* of the SRC of the International Sociological Association (edited by Rolf Kjolseth) will turn out to be a full-fledged journal to meet the demand. Sociolinguists also have not been able to form different schools of thought, in the sense we can speak of Chomskyan (or MIT) School, Tagmemic (or Pike) School, Firthian (or Prosodic) School, Iljemslev (or Glossematic) School, etc., in general linguistics, not to mention the different schools of sociology in the U. S. A. or elsewhere. Another drawback is the American and British (i.e. in the English-speaking world) experts' lack of knowledge or method of avoidance, of say, French, German or Soviet scholars. Cross-Atlantic communication from the New World generally stops with Levi Strauss in Paris or with some scholars in Britain!

In his work, *Traite de sociologie*, the French sociologist, Georges Gurvitch, has treated the sociologies of music, language, literature, religion, plastic arts, etc. as problems of the *sociologie des oeuvres de civilisation* (sociology of works of culture)—a phrase coined by Gurvitch to replace one used by him previously in the same context, *la sociologie de l'esprit* (sociology of the mind). Gurvitch says in this connection that 'the sociology of the mind has no "imperialist" claims; it does not pretend to take the place of "philosophy" it will, however, oblige the latter more and more to account of its sociological counterpart and the work that it is doing.' Gurvitch's "dialectical sociology" treats various forms of art, language, etc., as an activity of the individual or social mind, and thus not only lose their own individual character, but are regarded in a kind of uniform light along with many other intellectual activities, despite the evident fact that individual or social intellectual activities cannot be reduced to a common denomination, psychologically, sociologically, emotionally, cognitively, temporally, or even physiologically. It speaks of a system bound view of society. Nevertheless, his views deserve our examination.

A sociology of language should not be equated with the philosophy of language; though it may be classified by some under 'sociology of knowledge', which is concerned 'to find out which type of thinking would be practised by men at this or that time'. In this regard, Karl Mannheim's view, the purpose of sociology of knowledge is 'to ascertain in the correlation between philosophical, intellectual "standpoints" on the one hand, and concrete social "currents" on the other (see) Paul Kecskemeti In: *Introduction to Karl Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge*, London, 1952) should appeal to anyone who in language only sees thought on the one hand and action on the other, each independent of the other. Lastly as H.J. Lieber has put it: Mannheim's works show that 'in the central concept of knowledge bound up with

being, a special method of understanding the structure and nature of intellectual life was found'. Both starting points—the sociology of mind as well as the variants of sociology of knowledge—must inevitably lead to an *a priori* way of thinking incompatible with an empirical approach to the sociology of language. The latter's aim is to proceed from the same basic assumptions as general sociology: observation of facts, generalizations based on factual investigation, a general interpretative theory. Here it is the facts—and not feeling, the metaphysical or imagery, to which the language can all too easily lead us—that must always be our guiding rule. Neither of these schools of thought would appear to meet these requirements, unless the sociology of knowledge is expanded to cover 'a complex field of research with modern sociological methods and techniques with a firm and, as far as logic is concerned, clearly defined place within a general theory of knowledge and science' (Rosenmaryr & Scheler, "Karl Mannheim und die Zukunft der Wissenssoziologie" in Silbermann (ed.) *Militanter Humanismus*, Frankfurt/Main, 1967).

How about 'sociology of culture' in regard to the classification of sociology of language? Well, "culture" is a polysemic term which has been used by the social scientists to mean quite a few things, if one cares to know the definitions collected by Kroeber and Kluchohn. It includes not only various forms of arts but also all patterns of behavior and social modes that are socially acquired and transmitted. No one will dispute that language is part of culture (with its broad definition). But if 'sociology of culture' puts an undue marked emphasis on the historical aspects of language, it will fail to put a correct picture as much of synchronic aspects will be out of discussion. Since the days of de Saussure, we are not confused on this topic. Moreover, the social existence of language speakers and language can be to a great extent out of focus in this discipline. One must not forget that all individual or group activities or adventures are found in a more complex reality, viz., the social reality or "interlaced" reality and need social sanction. The sociology of language has at least two aims to perform: firstly, to study and analyse the processes of human language behavior, specially the stability of behavioral patterns and changes; secondly, to define norms and role in such a way as to open the possibility of further discussion and practical action. Sociology of culture concerning itself "the social aspect of cultural life" which may be equated in our case as 'social history of language' is inadequate for our purpose; even if it is extended as "theory of relationship between language and society", the word 'relationship' would imply this field of enquiry is something more than sociology of culture, its scope become broader and would be treated under "sociology of cultural spheres of influence" (*Kulturwirkekreissoziologie*). As Sil

berman puts it in a different context (in case of arts): Since objective creations of the mind can never be opposed to what happens to society, but only be seen in a functional relation with it in particular cultural sphere of influence, no modern-thinking social scientist today can overlook the fact language, like economics, law, religion, the State, the arts, etc., are ultimately expressions of (though a special one) culture and society, as is already clear from the fact that they can be viewed from such different angles as symbolic representation (see Susanne Langer, *Philosophy to a new Key*, New York, 1956), communication process (see G. A. Miller, *Language and Communication*, New York, 1959), or in the last analysis, social process. All thinking and research on the sociology of language inevitably leads to the sphere of influence of language and must embrace them all.

The social aspect of the history of language is only one of many aims of a language sociologist. Social history is not a complete sociological study. The error has its origin in Durkheim's *fait social* (remember he had tremendous influence on de Saussure) ('social fact') which means in the sociological literature as 'sociological state of affairs', 'social fact' or even 'social phenomenon' according to context (see R. Koenig's Introduction to Émile Durkheim: *Die Regeln der soziologischen Methode*, Neuwied, 1961). The language sociologist, in his study of languages, must take into account social roles, social stratification, and social changes. The entire historical development of language cannot be investigated from the standpoint of sociability, though some may wrongly claim that it makes it possible to deduce the economic and social conditions of the entire community on the basis of its linguistic production (literature included). This may lead to lumping together historical social theory, social ethics, social pedagogies, epistemological considerations and concepts derived from economic history, to the exclusion of all sociological principles and methods. This presents social history in the guise of sociology of language and tendentious of ideas take precedence over realities. A proper language sociologist, however, must insist on realities; he must be a positive participant, i.e. must have a "cultural inheritance-competence" of language in society...this applies also to the history of language. If we take, for instance, language group, institution, language policy, language control, sociolinguistics of nationalism, language standardization the economics of language, language attitudes, bilingualism, etc., we see that they all are sociological facts that can be examined equally from the standpoint of a sociologist as from that of a historian or a political scientist.

If we make the above issue clear, it brings to the shore of determining the limits and finding means to define the position of the sociology

of language. Thus the primary concern of the social history is with those facts which stand in contrast with the social condition, possessing no regular connection or correlation with it, because they stem from the originality of great men. Their force and progress are neither constant nor regular. The sociology of language, on the other hand, as a sociology concerned with cultural spheres of influence, enquires into these historical facts which are correlated to one another and to the progress of society. They adapt themselves and develop in accordance with forces that one of the tasks of the sociology of language is to analyse and describe. The sociology of language will, of course, needs serious investigation (as a new branch of sociology and a here a new group may take a starting point) It needs the collaboration not only of the linguists, also of the psychologists, literary critics, ethnologists, folklorists, and above all sociologists and historians.

Another of the tasks of language sociologist will be to place language as a human activity form in the context of social relations and in the center of communication content. One must recall here the *magnum opus* of the sociologist, Pitrim Sorokin, *Social and Cultural Dynamics* (New York, 1937, 1941, 4 vols.), also his *Society, Culture and Personality* (New York, 1962) and *Sociocultural Causality: Time and Space, a Study of Referential Principles of Sociology and Social Science*, (Durham, 1943). Sorokin is the first sociologist, to our knowledge, who made an attempt to examine forms and expressions of man's activities (overt and covert) in relation to aspects of the social situation. While Sorokin points out that what he is writing about is not the history of cultures but the sociology of their evolution, he stresses in particular the importance of the social environment in the creative process and the interdependence of the social processes and forms of man's activities. "He concerns himself with the problems of analyses of the cultural and social integration of the social system." A recent book by the linguist-philosopher, Noam Chomsky, (*Language and Mind*, New York, 1968), has approached the issue in a different manner. Chomsky has argued that language and man are correlate, that they imply and necessitate each other. By language, he means, of course, social-signal-system of man, and by man, social-man as opposed to animal. "Language appears to be a unique phenomenon, without significant analogue in the animal world."

The course followed by modern language sociologists "like ethnographic semanticists have developed new and bias-free data collection techniques which emphasise the recording of speech in natural contexts, attempt to simulate natural context by prolonged experimentation with culturally realistic questionnaire construction, or work with group discussion...sociologists have acknowledged that linguistic form is to



some extent a function of social context....The ability to communicate effectively is a socially determined skill (as suggested by Hymes)", thus writes John Gumperz, one of very active sociolinguists of our time ("Language and Communication", *Annals of Am. Acad. Pol. Sc.*, Sept. '67, p. 229) The incorporation of knowledge relating language in the context of social relations is a new challenge to social scientists and will have the way for a new branch of sociology. One is astonished to find out that during the last two decades so many books, collections and papers have appeared, in the English reading world alone, on language sociology and social scientists from different disciplines are showing continuing and growing interests in this regard. This is certainly a great promise, the realisation of which will take some time. Unfortunately, one may note with regret that we do not yet have a text book integrating many of their recent findings, or defining the subject. One hopes, someday Joshua Fishman or Dell Hymes will sit down to work at it. Some still neglected fields of enquiry are the relation between language and personality, language use and existing, grammar of idioms, sociolinguistics of nationalism, to name a few suggested topics. The Marxian view of language analysis has also received little attention specially among the western scholars (The recent work of Maurice Cornforth, *Marxism and the Linguistic Philosophy*, London, 1967 is philosophical rather than language sociology,; but superb in its own merits). Sociology and philosophy are not at all hostile brothers, in fact, language sociology has or will have much to learn from social philosophy if it aims to be an empirical science.

A social object or phenomenon can exist only in and through communication expressed in reactions; thus communication is the foundation of the work of language and not just a by-product. As Levi Strauss puts it: "Here is a Copernican revolution, which will consist in interpreting society as a whole in terms of a theory of communication. This enterprise is currently possible on three levels; for the rules of kinship and marriage serve to assure the communication of women between groups, as economic rules serve to assure the communication of goods and services, and linguistic rules the communication of messages... But there is much else in society besides matrimonial, economic and linguistic exchanges. One finds also other languages, like art, myth, ritual, religion; and finally other elements not now susceptible of being structured, whether by their nature, or because of the insufficiency of our knowledge". (*Structural Anthropology*, New York, 1968, p. 83). Now Levi-Strauss here speaks of interpreting *society* as a whole, in terms of *communications*, and mentions the different elements of *society*. Thus the first abstractive principle is that anything is a datum which can be called a *social fact*. Keeping this in mind, we may conclude that in

telms of communication, language and competence, language and nature, above all language and every normal human experience cannot be separated from one another. ((This reminds one the opening couplet of Kalidasa's *Raghuvamsham*: Word and its meaning are (functionally) part of each other and are inseparable)).

In the sociological analysis of language speakers and speech habits, careful distinction is to be drawn between inherited instinctive talents, the nature of a normal productive speaker (user) of language and the socio-cultural unfolding of his personality, or, in other words, what is acquired and how. The linguistic insight on American English or a dialect of its own thrown in recent years by Chomsky or Labov has been possible because they are "native" speakers of them. Or as Anthony Wallace has said of a Chicago anthropologist, Divid Schneider, that it is difficult for the latter to grasp the full meaning and context of American kinship usage and function, in spite of latter's long residence in the States. Thus we find, in regard to gain control of a language, Chomsky's "linguistic competence", or Hymes' "sociolinguistic competence"/ "communicative competence" are rather narrowly defined and inadequate notions. This becomes obvious in case of understanding the proverbial sayings, idiomatic expressions, and the like of a language. Linguistic form is not only to a great extent a function of social context but also a matter of "cultural inheritance-competence". The socio-philosophical approach to the sociology of language rejects communication, *a priori*, and language-feeling (*das Sprachgefuehl*) plays a significant role.

Language obeys the laws of human consciousness. Both instincts (from the biological standpoint) and habits (from the sociological standpoint) are of equal importance. But, instinct or mind—i.e. both the 'mind' in itself and the mind 'for itself' becomes paramount. Note, however, language as such does not represent any social process, but can be interpreted sociologically and a desired sociological interpretation can be linked with a potent value judgment, and as a concession to 'mund' in all its glory, an approach is adopted which primarily analyses and recognises the work of language to the exclusion of factors that have influenced it and to the exclusions of its 'emanations'. Caution should be taken to an extreme position in the so called western and or Marxian interpretation. Basil Bernstein (*Language and Speech* Vol. 5, 1962) makes here an important contribution on the interrelationship between speaker's linguistic competence and their communicative competence in actual speech events with the notion that social relationship act as intervening variables between linguistic structures and their realization in a particular speech event.

A society can hardly be deduced from language, nor can it be

determined by *ex cathedra* what is to occupy a higher rank, nor linguistic models can be extended to analyse all aspects of society. It may not be often observable (expressible) as it may disappear in space and be limited in time. Only the experience of language is a tangible and observable factor. Bernstein's theoretical position (elaborated in many of his writings), however, demonstrates that it is possible to generate different patterns of language usage in society by exposing discussion groups having different social characteristics to similar topical stimuli. Language usage in such cases is independent of overt attitudes to language. (See Gumperz: "On the ethnology of linguistic change" in Bright (ed.) *Sociolinguistics*). Sociology of language usage thus becomes a collection of all social facts relevant to the practice of language (intergroup contacts), classification of these facts according to their importance for the practice of language, understanding and interpreting of all the factors that determine changes in the practice of language and understanding of all the factors that determine changes in practice. This refers not only to Durkheim's *fait social* but also to Weber's line of reasoning.

The role of individual in language, i.e. *individu socialise* (socialised individual) an expression of Charles Lalo: an individual who long before the creation and community use of the work of language possesses a collective spirit with which he expresses himself and through which he addresses himself to the recipient groups, can be subject to study. However, it should be borne in mind that linguistic evolution and revolution are not synthesis of isolated and independent attempts by numerous predecessors and everything is miraculously created from nothing by a stroke of genius; individual contributions may or do enrich the social function of language or create complexities. The point is also made clear in Plekhanov. "Owing to the specific qualities of their minds and characters, influential individuals can change the *individual features of events and some of their particular consequences*, but they cannot change their *general trend*, which is determined by other forces.... It has long been observed that great talents appear everywhere, whenever the social conditions favourable to their development exist. This means that every man of talent who *actually appears*, every man of talent who becomes a *social force*, is the product of *social relations*. Since this is the case, it is clear why talented people can change only individual features of events, but not their general trend; *they are themselves the product of this trend; were it not for that trend they would real...* (*The Role of Individual in History*, New York, 1940). Recent knowledge gained through psychiatry, psychology political science, ethnography, folklore, sociology, has emphasised that producer-product-production process in language situation is noteworthy, from the individual point of view. Profound social and structural change resulting a realign-

ment of power relationships among individual and groups, tends to linguistic uniformity. (See Barth: "Ethnic process in Pathan-Baluchi boundary" in *Indo-Iranica: Melange Presente a George Morgenstern a l'Occasion de son Soixante-Dixieme Anniversaire*, Wiesbaden, 1964). Thus individuals torn out of their setting as individuals, in a foreign country do tend to adopt the speech characteristics of the group among which they settle. But the country is also on record. A recent report prepared by the British Council for Aid to the refugees (*Elderly Refugees: a Report on a Survey into their Circumstances in Great Britain*) states: The language barrier emerges as a considerable handicap for many elderly refugees in Great Britain. In 1967 and 1968 the Council carried out a survey into the general circumstances of elderly refugees in Britain, involving 96 interview in London and in a large provincial conurbation. Then it was found that 39% could speak English and communicate adequately, nationalities were represented in the survey but poles predominated constituting 50% of the total state of the elderly refugees and a further 32% could comprehend fully. On the other hand, 16% had virtually no knowledge of English. Only 25% could read English with complete understanding, and over 10% could not read English at all (Reported in Vol. 1, 1969, *La Monda Lingvo-Problemo*, Rotterdam). For further details on bilingual psychopathology, for cross generation (parent-child) and conventionalized conflicts between the monolingual and bilingual communities, see Fishman *et al.* (*Language Loyalty in the United States...*, the Hague, 1966).

Language as confronted with a social phenomenon that manifests itself as a social process, as a social activity, that is language as communication of messages (like cultural and economic communication) needs two partner: giver-sender and receiver. It presupposes a communication channel—a system of symbols which can guide and regulate the interaction between the giver and the receiver. Within "language-society", this process needs a producing and a consuming group, both are individual men in the society, and through group contact, group conflict, group dynamics, group transformation, group identity, etc. they come into contact with each other. Though the origin of language still remains a human mystery, we know that language as matter preceded language as consciousness. Human society without a language is inconceivable as also human language without a society is a mere myth. Throughout man's marching onward in time, exchange relationship between the giver-receiver of interdependence, interrelation and interaction has brought new and novel, stable and changing, compromising and conflicting, attitude and atmosphere. The producer group has revealed new aspects and has accorded the consumer group the importance due to them as recipients and influences of linguistic crea-

tions (giver-receiver may be the same person in some occasions). Both the speakers and listeners, in the center of linguistic life, are characterized by the experience of language. Through contract-contact conflict, language as social action and process, is concretized and assumes a definite shape and function.

It is on man, however, in his socio-linguistic being, that language sociologist focuses. The spheres of influence of language must in all circumstances be seen in the light of relationships of the individual or of the group. Learning about a new culture as about a new language is not simply a matter of adding to an already existing body of information, but it requires a complete restructuring of perception and understanding (*verstehend*); it is not so much of learning rules and apply them in proper context, but to become involved in it. In achieving it, an experience of language (society) is a must. Only the experience of language can, as a social fact, be the starting point and central hinge of the sociology of language, as only it can create cultural sphere of influence, can be active and social. Whether one accepts or rejects, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis that language determines a speaker perception of the universe, it is beyond arguments that our view of our surroundings is affected by our speech patterns. Language as a social determinant of our existence is fundamental. The experience of language realised through social determinants of nature, variability and dependence will contribute to a direct connection between the knowledge about language and knowledge about society. Neither language nor society should be viewed as a set of beliefs and traditions which are independent of everyday behaviour. The experience of language is to be apprehended, i.e., actually to grasp it both in its socially organising and disorganizing, for the individual or society. In the analysis of the sociology of language, both the structural (human codes and symbols) and functional (effects of verbal message) elements as data must be collected, processed, analysed and reduced to abstraction, before they can be formulated to laws and tested. The aesthetic function (being able to follow and to be followed) of linguistic communication putting proper emphasis on form and content of a message, social function establishing between persons, events, ideas, cultural standards, or patterns of behaviour, psychic function determining what can be said when and how, play immensely significant roles in society. Socio-linguistic investigations should not indulge in formulating linguistic standards, etiquettes and values. This is just not the job of a language sociologist.

The goal of a modern sociology of language is to study the language as a special fact, not to explain the nature and essence of language themselves. The way language in society is experienced from a continuous

social process, involving interaction between message-giver and message-receiver, their socio-cultural environment and resulting in the creating of a communication channel and maintaining it effectively, in a process of reception and reaction. The spoken (or the written in some cases) symbol makes a certain impression on certain social groups in a meaningful and analysable way which to some extent determine and regulate the productive and receptive activities of giver and receiver. It involves the interaction of individuals, groups and institutions. It starts with man and leads back to man, in a complex chain of relationships, in a total socio-linguistic process. That is why the sociology of language is more meaningfully human of all human sciences. The primary concern of the sociology of language is to study the total language process:—the interaction and interdependence of language speakers, the production of language and the human sphere where it is spoken (communicated) - in regard to their importance as language forms.

The next aim of the sociology of language is to study man as the producer of language. This reviews the evidence on the evolution of language and man (see Hockett & Ascher, "The human revolution" in *Current Anthropology*, 5.3, June, 1964; also Lenneberg, *Biological Foundations of Language*, 1967). Note in this connection, if, as Chomsky proposes, linguistic universals,—those orderings which allow immediately to differentiate what is possible from what is not—"must simply be a biological property of the human mind", then it is likely that the biology of mind is itself "syntactical" (*The Listener*, May 30, 1968). Syntactical or not, linguistic cognitive etiology shows that parallels can be drawn between human mind and human language in its sentence formation rules. The study of man as the producer of language is aimed at a description and an analysis of man's social position and relationship in society, his social origin, ethnic-economic-educational-aesthetic background and membership as data are collected and analysed. Though the language (or work of language) or the ability of symbols to structure the apprehensions of man (see Susanne K. Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key*, 1942), he is not simply interested in analysing language as such, which is the job of a linguist.

Language as the intimate concern of an individual, say whistling to oneself, or monologues, or muttering may not engage the attention of a language sociologist. If a language object gets across individuality, is concretized, has a sociological reality value, is experienced and can be verified, i.e., if it produces a social effect, it will be his subject of analysis and attention. What is of interest to him is the social process and action, the definite fact brought into play by the work of art. On the other hand, sociology of language will be much concerned with the language groups(s). Sociological study of various sub-groups within a language

group, say study of caste-dialects or dialects, diglossia, bilingualism, different levels of speech, study of restricted codes, (individual and group behaviour during reading-writing-listening) motives and patterns, linguistic taste, the economics of language, language suppression, language policy, language engineering, language control, collective consciousness, and consensus of language, language education, etc., are some of the many problems that a language sociologist would like to investigate. The dynamic character of the social phenomenon "language" in its forms, functions, expressions and uses is his center of attention and investigation. In this way, a sociology of language achieves a generally understandable convincing and valid approach to the works of language and language production.

A sociology of language will be able to formulate and develop laws, to predict what can happen under what social circumstances, what can be controlled for the benefit of the linguistic society. Since man is the end and means of all languages, since all languages have sufficient expressive forms for their speakers, since all languages are comparable within sociolinguistic frame of reference, in his linguistic being man can be put in the right place and situation. The language sociologist will never separate language from reality. He never draws on knowledge that is not accessible to him. He does not indulge himself to investigate the social processes, social facts, their nature and origins, in order to see and prescribe what they should be. He does not develop theories that cannot be tested socially or are not based on social cognition.

The social implication and observation of facts gives the sociology of language a habitat and a name, a part of sociology and at the same time with an identity of its own, a new and competitive discipline by the side of sociology and linguistics.\*

\* This paper was written during the summer of 1968, while the author was in residence at the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla, India. My first thanks are due to its Director, Prof. Niharayan Ray. Though I have consulted the original sources in most cases, I would like to admit that in writing Parts I & III various published papers of Joshua A. Fishman, John J. Gumperz, Dell Hymes and A. Silbermann, and in writing Part II, A. G. Spritkin 1960, "Dialekticheski Materializm", In *Filosofskaya Entsiklopediya*, Moscow Vol. I, have been very helpful. I also owe a special debt of gratitude to Prof. Joshua A. Fishman (Jeshiva University) and Dr. Martha Allen (Geneva), my friend and former student. The ideas presented here will be incorporated in my forthcoming book, *Die Sprachen in der Gesellschaft*, Berlin, 1971. It is with deep respects, I dedicate this paper to the memory of my teachers, Wolfgang Steinitz (Berlin) and Uriel Weinreich (Columbia). SKG/.

ILARISH CHANDRA PRASAD

## A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF FOLKLORISTIC STUDIES IN BIHAR

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The following abbreviations have been used in this bibliography

(Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta)

- 1 J. Anth. Soc. Bom -Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay.
  - 2 JBBRAS - Journal of the Bombay Branch of Royal Asiatic Society
  - 3 JBRS ---Journal of the Bihar Research Society, Patna
  - 4 JBORS - Journal of the Bihar & Orissa Research Society, Patna
  - 5 JMS Journal of the Mythic Society of Bangalore
  - 6 J (R) ASB ---Journal of (Royal) Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta
  - 7 JSR - -Journal of the Social Research, Ranchi
  - 8 JU B ---Journal of the University of Bombay.
  - 9 BT -- Bihar Theatre, Patna.
  - 10 EA -- Eastern Anthropologist, Lucknow
  - 11 FL-- Folklore, Calcutta
  - 12 IA - Indian Antiquary, Bombay.
  - 13 IF.--Indian Folklore, Calcutta.
  14. IN -- Indian Nation. Patna.
  15. Mem of (R) ASB ---Memoirs of (Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta)
  - 16 MASB -Memoris of the Asiatic Society of Bengal
  - 17 JPASB - Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
  - 18 MH -Man in India, Ranchi
  - 19 NINQ -North Indian Notes and Queries, Allahabad
  - 20 VJ -Vanya-jati, Delhi
  - 21 ZDMG -Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft
- Other Journals, Periodicals, Magazines etc which have been consulted in preparing this bibliography are ---
- BULLETINS**
- (1) Bulletin of the Asiatic Science Institute.
  - (2) Bulletin of the Department of Anthropology, Calcutta.
  - (3) Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, Calcutta
  - (4) Bulletin of the A N Sinha Institute, Patna
  - (5) Bulletin of the Anthropological Survey of India, Calcutta.
  - (6) Indian Sociological Bulletin.



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## 'JIUTJA FESTIVAL'

My attention has been drawn to the article "Jiutia Festival: A reconsideration of the concept of 'Generalization'", by S. L. Srivastava in the 'Folklore' of August, 1969. I want to put forward something as an addition to the statement of the author, without entering into any controversy. The author has said that 'this festival is spread only in a particular area, i.e., in eastern U. P. But this is not quite a correct statement. Jimutavahana is worshipped not only in U. P., but also in Bengal and Bihar.<sup>1</sup> From an article published in 'Man in India' March, 1960, p. 8, it appears that this festival is in vogue in the Punjab also. Women of Bankura, Midnapore and other districts of West Bengal observe Jimutavahana Vrata or Jitastami Vrata and listen to the *katha* or stories referring to the greatness of the deity. Jimutavahana or Jiutbandhan is the same deity, as suggested by the author

In Sanskrit literature, viz., Kalhasaritsagar, Virhat Kathamanjari etc., Jimutavahana has been mentioned as the son of Salivahana or Jimutaketu. In Bengali folk poems and books on Vratas he has been referred to as the son of the Sun and there is a curious story regarding his birth. In one Bengali *Vratakatha* he has been called as the son of king Salivahana and the founder of Jitastami Vrata.<sup>2</sup>

Reference has been made to the worship of Jimutavahana in the Smriti digests, e.g., Camatkarcintaman and Varsakṛitya attributed to Vachaspati Misra and Vidyapati Thakura respectively. They have stated that it was taken from Bhavisya Puran, and Vishnudharmottar Puran. There is reference to Jimutavahana in books like Varsakṛitya by Rudradhar.<sup>3</sup>

Perhaps Jimutavahana could not secure respectable position in higher societies of India. Worship of Jimutavahana was forbidden in the society of Kshatriyas coming to Bengal in the booklet 'Mahajjar Nama' (1871). There was of course no objection to send the offerings to the deity at the houses of other people.<sup>4</sup>

Mr. Srivastava has referred to many stories of Jiutbandhan, but has not given any detailed account of any story. Stories of Jimutavahana as current in eastern India have been noticed by Prof. Chintaharan Chakravarti in esteemed journals.<sup>5</sup>

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## BOOK REVIEW

**FOUR PAPERS ON LITERATURE AND LINGUISTICS** by V. I. Subramoniam, P. R. Subramaniam, K. Pannerselvam and A. Govindakutty, published by Meenakshi Puthaka Nilayam, Madurai, 1, 19768, paperback, Pp. 48, Price : 1.75.

These papers were submitted to the Second International Conference-Seminar of Tamil Studies, sponsored by the International Association of Tamil Research (IATR) in Madras in 1968. Since the first of the four papers, was felt unnecessary by the Academic Committee of the Conference-Seminar it was returned forthwith. Second to fourth too were returned to the authors later which prompted them to publish the booklet which has the following papers : (1) Landmarks in the History of Tamil Literature, Pp. 1-12, (2) Folklore as Precursor of Literature Pp. 13-28, (3) A Dimodel System of Inscriptional and Literary Dialect, Pp. 29-40 and (4) Vocative Pp. 41-48.

The contributor of the first article in his survey of the Tamil literature has not done justice to his predecessors who rendered effective services for the development and progress of Tamil literature. While detailing folklore study in Tamilnad he has written that the "Collections of folklore has been attempted by M. Arunachalam, K. V. Jagannathan, N. Vanamamalai etc." but the history of folklore study of Tamilnad provide a different picture. It is a partial statement. This type of partial survey is not wanted in a learned paper. P. R. Subramaniam's paper is the best of the four. He has tried to describe the unrefined and refined folklore and also the morphology of folk genre and said 'Folklore takes the averaged-out dialect as its medium.' He wanted to provide concerned readers with the understanding of their likenesses and differences among the folklore and literature. He hopes that his is an impetus for the students of literature and linguistics in the field of Tamil folklore but it should be said that some of his ideas is languid and the treatment is not as exhaustive as is wanted from a scholar of his stature. There are many points where agreement with the author may not be possible. As for example, he says : "Colloquial words and slangs are abundant in folklore. But its dialectalism has been replaced by literary style in the epic." This is not cent percent correct. The third article is an attempt to compare the language of inscriptions (I. D. of 7th, 8th and 9th centuries A. D. with the contemporary dialect of Teevaram of St. Appar who lived during the period of later Pallava king Mahendravarman (600-630 A.D.) and the fourth paper is on vocative which is used to address a person. The vocative system of the Dravidian cultivated languages, according to the author, may be described with the help of a minimum number of rules. To substantiate this he has given some examples. It is a good reading.

Dr. B. N. Shastree

## EDITORIAL

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Men cannot afford to live together on their merits and they adjust themselves by their demerits—by their customs and traditions and by their love of gossip or by sheer tolerance. Here again, as so often, nature delights to put us between extreme antagonisms, and our safety is in the skill with which we keep diagonal line. A sound mind will derive the principles of being respectful to these from insight, with ever a purer ascent to the sufficient and absolute right. The transmission of knowledge, opinion, doctrines, practices, etc. from generation to generation is tradition. And consequently, while we examine numerous customs and traditions which have been recognised either as actual survivals to totemism or as relics of the ideology, we find that they are deeply rooted in Indian society.

It is well-known that the membership of the clan is determined by descent. In the last century, following Bachofen, ethnologists were agreed that descent was reckoned originally through the mother. This view has been rejected by nearly all authorities without any agreed alternative. It has again been reaffirmed by Briffault who said that the old view is correct.

The members of the clan have a strong sense of affinity, even identity, with their totem species. The men who live on witchetty-grubs, thriving when they thrive, starving when they starve are literally flesh of their flesh and blood of their blood—a relationship which they express by saying that they are witchetty-grubs. Hence, when the authority exercised by the clan elders gives rise to ancestor worship. The ancestors are not worshipped in human shape but in that of the totemic animal or plant. So the first stage in the evolution of totemism was segmentation of the primitive sorde, which divided in order to gain access to different success of food supply. So long as the new groups thus created lost touch with one another, the change was merely quantitative—two groups instead of one; but at some stage it became qualitative. Instead of continuing to get their food independently by simple appropriation, they became integrated as a pair of interdependent clans. The food produced by each group was distributed between the two or more and this system of co-operation was maintained by means of taboo. This is said by George Thompson.

Many instances are recorded from modern tribes of the transition from matrilineal to patrilineal descent, none of the reverse process. We find that matrilineal descent preponderates slightly in the hunting-



grades. but then declines, rapidly in the pastoral grades, much more slowly in the agricultural. This shows that the mode of descent is corrected with the mode of production.

Again in the pre-hunting stage there was no production, there was only simple appropriation of seeds, fruits, and small animals, and consequently there was no division of labour. With the invention of spear, however, hunting became the men's task, while the woman continued the work of food-gathering. This is modified again and sexual division of labour in the came into existence due to the relative immobility of women during pregnancy and lactation. This was followed by economic division of labour and birth of caste system : This caste system in India has its own peculiarity and characteristics which should be studied elaborately and in this respect country's folklorologists should not be neglected and be dependent on the works of some cultural anthropologists or social historians. Let the folklorologists realise this point and let them undertake studies of caste with the aid of folklore but of depending on the cultural anthropologists alone.

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# FOLKLORE

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BHABAGRAHI MISHRA

## BOYKER'S "FOLK LITERATURE" (GERMANIC): A REVIEW ARTICLE<sup>1</sup>

*It has been decided recently by the government of India to spend millions of rupees in developing the regional languages. Out of this money a major portion will be spent in compiling dictionaries, lexicons, etc. Many of the terminologies and concepts in other languages will be borrowed many terms will be coined. The following article discusses such problems faced in European countries and may give an insight to scholars who would be working on this line in India.*

A science, as it matures, classifies and arranges the concepts and terminologies, to be used without much ambiguity. As such the preparation of a lexical work confronts the author with a variety of problems. These problems include the selection of language, borrowing of vocabulary from other branches of knowledge, terms and concept inside and outside the discipline, the format or the arrangement to be followed and a host of such facts.

In this paper, the theoretical considerations faced by the committee is considered in the beginning, in order to comprehend the merits and demerits of the volume under review. The problems for compiling a dictionary as enunciated in the preceding paragraph was discussed by the editorial board at the International Congress of Regional European Ethnology and Folklore held in Stockholm in 1951 and the CIAP conference held at Namur in 1953.<sup>2</sup> English was chosen as the editorial language for the dictionary and French, German, and one of the Scandinavian languages as subsidiary languages. If necessary, concepts

from Slavic and Spanish origin were to be considered for inclusion.<sup>3</sup> The object of the dictionary was set forth as follows :

- (a) ...to render each term or concept in some representative languages.
- (b) ...to define the content of the concepts, establish their dimensions and their relations to other ethnological and folkloristic concepts.<sup>4</sup>

The dictionary was also to assume an "authoritative attitude" instead of formally reporting the opinion of other scholars. Prof. Ake Hultkrantz, the chief editor of the series, in his article in *Laos*,<sup>5</sup> explains the problem of preparing lexical literature on ethnology and puts forward a scheme for this series. According to him the problems for the preparation of an ethnological dictionary are threefold,<sup>6</sup> i.e., (1) type categories are to be defined in such a way that ethnological materials can be fitted into it, (2) though type categories can be established for social and mental culture, it is difficult to develop type categories for material culture, (3) ethnological dictionary should be compiled on the basis of functional arrangement of ethnological materials rather than historical alone. To sum up Hultkrantz's arguments, it can be said that he advocates a synthesis between the historical view point, conceptual analysis and functionalist discussions. He followed these principles closely in *Ethnological Concepts* (Vol I of this series). But he did not comprehend the problems to be faced by Bodker, whose primary concern was oral literature. As such Bodker's *Folk Literature (Germanic)* had to be a departure from the agreed principles laid down by the editorial committee. As the science of Folklore in the English speaking countries, is a little more than a century old, terms and concepts in English language to express the various genres of oral literature are so meagre that, terms and concepts from the Germanic languages can be adapted, if and when necessary. But a question naturally arises whether terms and concepts evolving from a particular cultural context can be satisfactorily adapted in another context, without change in the meaning, both literal and conceptual. The second question that may be raised in this regard is how far inventive terminology could be accepted to express the concepts of the folk, with whose literature we are concerned. Before analysing these questions in the context of Bodker's work, it will be worthwhile to note Bodker's own comments about it.

Bodker, in compiling the different terms and concepts of folk literature has leaned heavily on von Sydow's inventive terminology. What Bodker expressed in his article in *Laos* in 1955, seems to be his goal in 1965 in the work under review. Discussing the terminological problems in folklore, Bodker stated :

I have learned to a great extent on von Sydow's terminology but unfortunately von Sydow never got to a conclusion of his work in this field. That accounts for the great fact that part of the terminology proposed by him is only vaguely defined; and owing to translation into both German and English, the same concept is often placed under more than one heading. Even though this causes some inconvenience I do not hesitate to declare that von Sydow's terminological suggestions are highly instructive and of great importance for a more precise understanding of the categories of tradition and popular thought.<sup>7</sup>

As regards the language to be employed in the dictionary, Bodker completely disagrees with the editorial committee, contradicting thereby the concepts of "secondary terms" and "authorised definitions". Explaining the reason for his disagreement he says:

In itself, the English language, as compared with the above mentioned "secondary" languages, is so lacking in folkloristic terms that it can not form the sole basis of a Dictionary of Folk Literature; nor is it possible simply to translate the national terms from those languages into English, thereby forcing upon the English language a terminology of foreign origin.<sup>8</sup>

As a result of which Bodker uses English as editorial language, but terms and concepts from Danish, Faroese, German, Dutch (Holland), Icelandic, Norwegian, Swedish, Old English have been treated in equal par with English. For this reason Hultkrantz in the preface to this volume remarks that the materials have been presented under "national denominations instead of being referred to the functional type they represent".<sup>9</sup> The above mentioned statement of Bodker when compared with the remark of Hultkrantz, suggests clearly that Bodker does not consider it as valuable to adapt terms and concepts of a culture group in another context. So he disagrees with the committee in regard to "authorized" definitions as the basis of the dictionary. Explaining his view, Bodker writes:

The writer has not thought himself competent to formulate and "authorize" his definitions but has endeavoured to report as objectively as possible without introducing subjective criticisms, such as



he has frequently felt about the often peculiar formulations given by the authors quoted.<sup>10</sup>

This explains the fact that Bodker has his doubts about the "peculiar formulations" by the authors which could adequately express the concepts of the folk. Since Bodker's approach has been to "report as objectively as possible", he has been criticized by the editorial committee for making the work encyclopaedic rather than dictionary. But no body can fail to appreciate the tremendous task undertaken by Bodker in providing cross references to similar, synonymous or parallel terms and concepts. It would have been much more appreciated if he would have commented about the definitions in each item. Since he has compiled the dictionary with rich cross references, it is for the folklorists to pick up or decide which terms and concepts explain adequately his materials under examination.

For the purpose of the present paper, a few terms and concepts will be examined to show which of these terms expresses themselves adequately and which of them is ambiguous. In defining *folktale*, Bodker quotes Aarne, Thompson, Krappe, Dorson and Roberts. Though Thompson feels that the German term *marchen*, is more adequate, there is no doubt about the fact that *folktale* has achieved the same meaning as that of *marchen*, because of its wider use. More so, it encompasses the whole field of folk narratives. Similarly the term *folk song*, defined as 'a song which has been created by common people' is more inclusive than *song*, which may mean art songs also. Of course when the question of its origin is discussed, i.e., whether it is of community authorship or individual authorship, the term has to be expressed in regard to its field context. Since *folk song* is often correlated with popular or mass literature, the concern of the folklorists is to distinguish between the various uses. For the folklorists a *folk song* means a song in the oral tradition, rather than composed songs by individual authors for propaganda purposes as found in communist countries. Once this basic concept is accepted, the different genres like *ballad*, *carol songs*, *work songs* etc., can easily be classified according to their form, contents or theme.

In defining *Myth*, Bodker has quoted only Thompson and Krappe. Though the definition is considered in folkloristic sense, Freudian, Jungian, or structural definition of Levi Strauss cannot be entirely omitted. These definitions would clarify the concept underlying the term *myth* in a broader way would have been of benefit to the folklorists. The term *myth* in its generic sense denotes "what is said". But Thompson gives it a dimension by interpreting it as a tale that "tells of sacred beings and of semi-divine heres and of the origin of all beings, usually through

the agency of these sacred beings". Olrik defining the similar term *Myte* suggests it as a definition of content rather than form and considers it as a sub-category of *Sagn*. So in order to make the term more comprehensive, in respect of form and content, it would have been welcomed to include definitions of anthropologists, psychologists and other social scientists.

The terms *fairy tale* and *feen-marchen* are unfortunate translation of the French term *conte des fees*, which cannot be considered as a possible sub category of *folktale*, since the term for all practical purposes does not have much relevance. In only a few tales the fairies or fees are of primary concern to the tale. The tales depict more about the traditional beliefs rather than the adventures of the fairies. As between the terms *aetiofable* and *trickster fable*, neither of them seem to be clear. Rather the term *teickrster tale* is more inclusive. The central attraction of the tale is the trickster and his foolish action. The aetiological explanation is of secondary importance.

The term *legend* is also not self explanatory, unless it is classified according to religious and non-religious nature. Even so it is very hard to comprehend what the term exactly means, since it sometimes embraces the myths, explanatory tale and a number of similar terms. The best definition of a legend perhaps would be a tale about a person or place or an event, be it religious or secular.

Considering the inventive terminologies, one cannot ignore von Sydow. Perhaps he has invented a number of terms and concepts, all of which have not found its way to folkloristic currency. But some of these terms have been accepted for the clarity of the genre it expresses. *Memorat* is one of such coinages. It means a tale of personal experience, which through passage of time finds place in the traditional narratives. Peuckert clarifies the term in a more realistic way by elucidating that "the experiences from which a *memorat* grows may be divided into two main groups: those that are released by external causes and those that spring from internal psychic process". So far as the use of the term in the vocabulary of the folklorists is concerned, the internal psychic process seems to me a plausible explanation for its survival in tradition. *Fabulate*, a mono-episodic tale, which is non personal, but a believed event is so close to other forms of fable that it is very difficult to distinguish its real characteristic. In folkloristic scholarship it has been given entrance to more in the sense of fable, as the term *fabula* (the name of the German journal) is more a broader term denoting folk narrative in general rather than its generic meaning.

Another important coinage of von Sydow is *oicotype*. By this term he means that a tale in a special geographical, national or culture area would take a different form. But Thompson feels that it is an

exaggerated term as regards its usefulness is concerned. More so, it is not distinguishable from the term *variant*. The term *Urform* has been accepted in the vocabulary of the folklorists laying stress on historic-geographic method. As parallel term, *archetype* is more inclusive, which may cover Jungian concept too. The other parallel terms are *type*, *thema*, *original theme* etc., out of which *type* has attained a specific connotation for the folklorists, in the sense Thompson defines it as a tale having independent existence, without depending for its meaning on other tales. In this sense, it is different from *Urform*, or *archetype*. So this difference may be born in mind in distinguishing the terms in their conceptual setting rather than considering them as synonymous terms in their generic meaning.

Before considering some of the terms which may be of importance to American folklorists, I wish to examine some of the terms defined by American folklorists. One of such terms is *protest folksong*, defined by Greenway as "ballads composed and sung by an individual, or rousing songs improvised on the picket line", to my mind, is not a term of folkloristic significance. These songs may be considered as popular songs or mass literature 'composed' for a specific and in view, rather than spontaneous as a folk song is or supposed to be. Out of the terms *lying tale*, *tall tale*, *tale of lying*, the *tall tale* expresses more significantly the meaning and exaggeration about the 'fake heroes' in the American context. Similarly *theme* as a group of motifs is of special significance to the folklorists rather than its literary meaning corresponding to the core of literary tale, in which case it may mean as an idea too. In order to distinguish between the folkloristic and literary meaning, i.e., concrete and discernible in one hand and abstract and philosophic on the other hand the term *thema* may be considered suitable, in as much as it only means a group of motifs.

Out of the terms *Unfinished tale*, *catch tale*, *endless tale*, *formula tale*, *cumulative tale*, the term *formula tale* is more significant, because it expresses a certain narrative technique found in such tales. The narrator employs certain catch words or phrases which gives as cue to the audience or reader to visualise that the tale is endless. This catch word works like a phrase for the reader or the audiences and arouses curiosity. So the term *formula tale* is more comprehensive.

Besides the terms and concepts discussed above some of the Scandinavian terms which are of specific importance for the folklorists may be discussed here. *Schwank* is one of such terms which could be accepted by the American folklorists. Defined by Bolte, it encompasses *joke*, *jest*, *merry tale*, *anecdote*, *noodle story* and a number of other Scandinavian terms, this form of narrative is more realistic or closer to reality. Since this is a broader concept than the other terms, it may be

of importance for the American folklorists. Similarly the term *visa* in its generic meaning as "a manner of singing" may be considered suitable in the study of folk music of specific regional culture groups. *Wassail* as a "*folksong* sung by children and young people going from house to house in connection with a seasonal 'luck visit' seems to me a suitable concept to be used in the scholarship related with children's lore. This term would then cover *calendric song*, *may song*. The conceptual distinction in case of ballads in both Germanic and Scandinavian languages is so vast that, these terms may not possibly be of interest to all folklorists, except in terms of historical research on a particular type or category of ballad and its source of origin and its meaning in the parent country.

Before concluding this discussion, I would like to enumerate a pair of terms invented by von Sydow, particularly to prove the first question raised by me in the beginning of this paper. These terms are *analogism* and *chimerism*. The distinction between these two terms is only of degree rather than kind. Both the terms depict 'anthropomorphizing' traits of the animals. Whereas *analogism* is only a characteristic feature of *animal fables*, *chimerism* describes about the world of kings and princesses which is unfamiliar to the peasants. Though the theoretical distinction between these two terms speaks of von Sydow's keen insight in understanding the characteristic features and distinction of various tales, it can hardly be accepted and adapted in international usage. Terms and concepts coined or adapted from other language should convey the general features of the particular genre or idea rather than particular differences found in a few tales. Standardization of terms and concepts for international use depend largely on generalisation of facts. Minor differences will always be there in different culture groups with regard to the meaning of the terms which could be explained descriptively rather than by trying to invent new terms, which may confuse the scholars of other languages. Similarly some of the terms may not have similar genres in another culture area. So forcing of one vocabulary on another language area can hardly be accepted. For this reason, though von Sydow's terminologies speak of his clear understanding and the sharp distinction between different genres, it has hardly been adapted in the vocabulary of the folklorists, with certain exceptions.

Coming to my second question raised in the beginning of this paper, it may be said without fear of contradiction, that it is always better to look for the terms used by the folks themselves rather than coining terms. The terms used by the folks themselves depict both the textual and the contextual meaning.

Minor genres like proverbs, riddles and other forms have been reserved by Bodker for a future volume. When published, this may supply with some more cross references to the terms and concepts already compiled in this volume.

Another point may be raised about the usage of the terms and concepts, in national and international scholarship. Can the culture context involved in a term and concept of a particular language group be transferred to another language? Have all the terms and concepts parallel or synonymous terms in different languages? Different language areas have different historical traditions, in which different terms and concepts have arisen in different time level. For example the peasant tradition in Europe may not have any counterpart in either Asian or American society. As such terms and concepts of peasant culture in Europe may not have any significance for the farming life of the early days of American society. Even the terms in Europe may have undergone change during the passage of time. Perhaps that is the reason for which Bodker disagreed with the committee in formulating "authorized" terms to be used by all folklorists, irrespective of their cultural set up. This dictionary fulfills an important aspect of folklore scholarship, in reporting about the different terms and concepts in different languages and their meanings, giving adequate opportunity for international scholars to understand comparative situation in different language or culture areas.

But the question remains to be solved, whether "International" vocabulary in terms and concepts can be achieved, ignoring the national terms altogether. One cannot completely ignore the dominant role of nationalism (for that matter regionalism also) even in formulating and compiling folkloristic terms and concepts for national or international use.

With all its demerits (disagreement with the laid down principle for the series), the dictionary should be considered a welcome addition to the reference shelf of the student of folklore. Bodker supplies a good bibliography at the end of the dictionary. It would have been better if he had prepared an index of authors quoted in the body of the book, for ready reference. Since the dictionary is a departure from the principles agreed by the editorial board, the chief editor, Hultkrantz, assures us of a supplementary volume on Western ethnology and folklore. When all the volumes in this series are published, we can better evaluate how effectively the series covers the scope of regional European ethnology and its contribution to International folklore scholarship.

*The Hartford Seminary Foundation Connecticut, U. S. A.*

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## HISTORICAL APPROACH TO FOLKLORE STUDY

### I

#### **Introduction :**

History and Folklore, belong to two different disciplines. Apparently these two disciplines seem to be, isolated from each other. Some historians think that history has no inner relation with folklore. They think: 'History is a record of the achievements of man. But history proper only deals with facts, and facts can only be known from records of some kind or other. History is also a record of the lives of a few greatmen, kings and kingdoms'. 'The historical view point of a half century ago is epitomized by statements of eminent historians and essayists to the effect that history is the record of the lives of a few greatmen, that there is no history apart from biography. History consisted of reigns, campaigns, dates.<sup>1</sup> This was the view of the historians in the last centuries. Fortunately, in this century this idea is changed to some extent. Modern historians and social scientists along with the folklorists pay much attention to the vital aspects of many social behaviour and the phases of the development of society and culture.

Throught the world, the history of a particular country or a region is being reconstructed on the basis of archaeological findings, choronological data, manuscripts, coins, inscriptions, rock edicts, memors, monuments and records etc. Historians so far looked at folkloristic elements with sheer negligence. They still pay less value for this new science.

In this century, all arts and sciences are co-relative and inter-dependent. Interdisciplinary studies can only throw light on the dark caves and compartments of human history. To-day history is not only a science of chronology of royal dynasties or empires. As civilisation advances and social order changes, the general approach to human history also changes. Now-a-days historians attempt to unveil the inter-history, cultural history and social changes of mankind. This type of history is the history of the people of a particular region or country. The elements of cultural history are akin to folklore, as both are unrecorded traditions of the people.

Folklore comprises of tales, ballads, proverbs, songs, rhymes, customs, beliefs, superstitions, magic, rituals, festivals, fairs etc. The totality of folklore contribute enormously towards the reconstruction of

cultural history of a country. Historians and folklorists thus work for a common purpose i.e. for the reconstruction of cultural history of people of a particular region. The culture-complex and culture traits of a particular culture-zone is the subject of investigation of a folklorist, and at the same time it is the subject of a historian of peoples' cultural history.

Dynastic historians' functions are different. They attempt to draw a chronological picture which naturally presents a picture of upper stratum. Cultural historians only penetrate into the bottom of society to collect relevant materials for peoples' history. Folklore though not history, yet its main objective is to reconstruct the history of mind i.e. the history of peoples' total social behaviour. Thus the culture-historian and the folklorist meet at a certain crossing point.

Tradition—unrecorded tradition of people, is of immense value in respect of cultural dynamics. Historian V. A. Smith rightly observes:

"The historian of the remote past of any nation must be content to rely much upon tradition as embodied in literature".<sup>2</sup>

## II

There are four types of sources for the early history of India. They are: (i) tradition, (ii) evidence of archaeology monumental, epigraphic & numismatic, (iii) contemporary literature, and (iv) art & architecture. Tradition is common to history and folklore. Folklore is inter-related with oral tradition only. Oral tradition is the soul of Folklore. Written literature based on folk tradition or legends may indirectly help in the studies of folklore. In India the *jatakas*, the *puranas*, the *epics*, folktales, *chhanda* or rhymes, ballads, songs or lyrics, and scripture are considered to be most valuable elements for its cultural history. These elements are also composite particles of folklore of India. Hence, we can say that our earliest history directly depends on folkloric elements. Each complements other directly or indirectly.

From this point of view, we can say that 'from Folklore a historian can link up history, a linguist can increase his stock of words, a socio-economist can have data on folklife which may open up a new vista, a socio-biologist can trace up a nation's cultural life, an archaeologist may draw a line on the aesthetic senses of the folk people. The anthropologist can see a total man through culture-change, relics and beliefs. A folklorist is the combination of all these. So a folklorist has a most important role to play in human history and folklore is a vital subject there'.<sup>3</sup>

Folklore over and above deals with the unrecorded traditional elements of the people. It represents faithfully the hopes and aspirations,



sorrows and sufferings, feelings and sentiments of the folks. In ballads (Mymensingh and Eastern Bengal) of East Bengal and in 'Gopichandrer Gan', we find the social reality with the blending of feelings and sentiments of the folk people. Folksongs (Gajan, Gambhira, Tusu, Bhatiall, Bhadu etc.) also carries the blue prints of social phenomena. Hence folklore is a historical science. It is "Historical" because, it throws light on man's past social life and "science" because it adheres to the principles of science.<sup>4</sup> It is also closely related to history, philology, anthropology, archaeology, social science, ethnography, psychology and literature. Folklore is a combination of sciences and arts. Traditions are store-house. "History" is indebted to tradition for preserving the most remote facts. But there is a vital difference in the processes of historical datings and in the manners of folkloric timings. We can achieve the definite period or time from the direct evidences of history such as archaeological findings, monuments, coins, inscriptions etc., but in folklore we do not get the exact date. In historical analysis and studies the period of a particular king or a dynasty can easily be achieved from direct sources. Even the archaeological findings and ancient relics could be deciphered through the process radio-carbon. These process is not applicable to folklore proper. Because folkloristic elements are neither too old nor too new. "There are no static human culture that continue without change for a long period of time".<sup>5</sup>

In folktales or legends, we get a 'continuum period'. The narrator begins his tales in this way: 'Once upon a time there was a King' or 'long long ago etc. ...' In India the story teller begins his tale by saying: 'Asthi Godabari Tire Bishala Shalmohi Taru' etc....' Throughout the world this is the pattern of story telling. This pattern indicates no exact period of time, but indirectly the teller mingles up the socio-religious or socio-economic or socio-political elements in his or her stories. Thus a blue print of time is left indistinctly in folk tales, legends etc. The folktales, legends thus come into close contact with local-history. No exactness of time can be achieved from these tales, but a 'continuum period', a long period can be achieved out of them. 'The period may vary; but we reach from prehistoric culture to historic event'.<sup>6</sup>

Ritual-formulae, historical songs or poems contain informations regarding the history of a particular group of people. Picture of social systems or social structures are often available from those materials. But these social structures do not stretch back to remote past of human societies, only because of their ever hanging propensities. 'Historical tales are mainly useful as sources of information about military, political, social, institutional, and legal history. Didactic tales provide information about cultural values. Artistic tales have, on the whole, little value except for the history of psychological attitudes, whereas tales

containing personal recollections can be used as sources of information for all forms of history.”<sup>7</sup>

These tales or stories provide three types of history (i) concerning general history of a country, (ii) concerning local history or regional history, (iii) concerning family history.

Transmission of tales from one generation to another, involves in a great organic change. The pattern although remains unchanged, but the contents gradually change. Folklore is the direct expression of the mind of the people. So it generously contributes towards the reconstruction of cultural history. ‘Folklore perpetuates the patterns of culture and through its study we can often explain the motifs and the meaning of culture. The science of folklore, therefore, contribute in a great measure to the history and interpretation of human life’.<sup>8</sup>

Mr. Espinoza once again rightly opines that ‘the science of Folklore is that branch of human knowledge that collects, classifies and studies in a scientific manner the materials of folklore in order to interpret the life and culture of peoples across the ages’.<sup>9</sup>

There is no doubt that folklore to a great extent bridges up the gap of history. The science of folklore is also a social science, as it embraces the social life of people of a given country or region. It is also a ‘historical science in as much as it throws an welcome light on the past history of the mankind by inductive scientific method. This deals with the interpretation of historical documents chiefly of the ancient orient’.<sup>10</sup>

Perhistoric archaeology, history and folklore altogether throw immense light on the past history of human society and social behaviour of the people of the past and present. Folklore thus helps to reconstruct the cultural history of a country in collaboration with other sciences or allied disciplines. As a historical science, folklore would get more momentum and it would play a vital role in the years to come, in the reconstruction of the history of the people of a country.

### **An Analysis : Socio-Historical Method**

Let us now analyse a few examples from the Folklore of Bengal :

(a) *Chale Gumalo Para Juralo*

*Bargi alo deshe*

*Bul-Bulete Dhan Khayeche*

*Khajana Debo Kise.* \*

This cradle song embodies a historical fact. That is ‘Bargi alo

\*ছেলে ঘুমালো পাড়া জুড়ালো বর্গী এলো দেশে ।

বুলবুলিতে ধান খেয়েছে খাজনা দেব কিসে ॥

dese'. 'Bargi' means 'Marathi Harbads'—the plunderers of Maharashtra. In the Seventeenth century's Bengal, these 'Bargis' disturbed frequently the Western borders of this country. Corresponding references of 'Bargis' may be had from 'Maharashtra Purana' by Gangaram and—"Annada Mangal" by Bharatchandra. The people of the then Western Bengal were panicky due to the sudden attack of the 'Bargis'.

In the beginning of Eighteenth century, the Bargis disappeared. No *chhada* on the Bargis was composed by the folk society henceforth. This *chhada* was composed in the seventeenth century. But the reminiscences of those plunderers were alive in the memory of the people for a long time. The mothers and grand-mothers used to sing the lullaby songs or cradle song while nursing their children or grand-children into slumber. It is remarkable that the continuation of this *chhada* ceased and subsequently new elements replaced the old theme. Thus the tradition of *chhada* went on orally in Bengal. This type of *chhada* supplies complimentary facts for the reconstruction of regional, cultural or social history. Ascertainment of age of such type of folklore possible only by analysing the corresponding socio-historical materials. Critic of literature so rightly observed: 'used as a social document, literature can be made to yield outlines of social history'.<sup>11</sup>

(b) *Agdoo Bagdoo Ghoradoo Saje.*  
*Janj Kansar Mridong Baje.*\*

This *chhada* (rhyme) refers to 'Dom Chaturanga Sena' (Dom Battalians of Bengal) of Dharmangal Kavya of Ghanaram. Dom is a Dravidian menial caste of Bengal. "They are also known as Chandal or Dhangad".<sup>12</sup> They are the believers of totemistic cults and worshipper of Dharamaraj, Bhadu, Kalubir, Kali etc. Doms are known as heroic caste community of West Bengal. They are now agriculturists. "According to popular traditions it seems that during the middle ages the Dom developed into a martial race regarding the Western Border of Bengal in the employment of the local chiefs".<sup>13</sup>

We may get historical data from this *chhada*, which refers to the valiant Doms. It may be mentioned here that there are references of the Doms, Chandals, and Savars in *Charyapada* (10th—12th century). The Doms of the then Bengal lived in the outskirts of the city and they were untouchable. Weaving and craftsmanship were their professions. They belong to Austric group of people. Their existence in Bengal, since

\* আগুডুম্ বাগুডুম্ ঘোড়াডুম্ সাজে  
ঝাঁঝ কঁসর মৃদঙ্গ বাজে ॥

Tenth century, have been established in *charyapada* and once again in the 'Dharmamongal Kavya' in the Seventeenth century.

So we can easily establish a definite period of the said *chhada*. The period is extended from 10th century to 17th century (i.e. from Pala period to Sen dynasty). Now-a-days the background and the content of this *chhada* has been changed. But its form is yet passing on. Folklore changes but never dies. These *chhadas* are living proofs of this dictum.

(c) Not only *chhada* but the ballads, folktales and the folk religious-rites (Brata) are also 'living' fossil' of social history of Bengal. 'It is in folklore that we find an expression of genuine desires, aspirations, genius, emotions, and thoughts of a people. A reconstruction of the early history and civilisation of Bengal is only possible by a critical study of the folk-lore, folk rites and practices which prevail even today in different parts of the country. They are the documents of our earliest culture for which we have no written record.'<sup>14</sup> This is an unrecorded history' or 'oral history', the history, according to Robert Redfield, written from 'bottom up'.

The Ballads of Eastern Bengal also represent historical facts. 'Raja Raghur Pala' (Mymensing) corresponds to the regime of Jahangir (Seveenth century). Most probably the story was composed during this period. The Ballad of 'Mahipal' (Collected by Monsuruddin), corresponds to the history of Mahipal of Pal dynasty. (10th century). The copper inscriptions of Pal dynasty represent the vivid historical facts that Mahipal was a tyrant.

There are more ballads which may be treated as documents for history of a particular society or region. The Bratas of Bengal may also be treated as the blue-print of religious behaviour or practices of the womanfolk of Bengal. The Laksmi Brata represents the agricultural phase of culture in Bengal. Agricultural deities all over the world are female. We get similar rites in Mexico and Peru. Agricultural plants are closely associated with these religious rites. By careful analysis of these rites and their elements we may reconstruct the ancient cultural phases of India. The Socio-historical folkloric materials of Bengal will certainly help a folklorist or a social scientist to unveil the traditional folk-history of the region. It may rightly be observed that folklore is a historical science'—a science of social history.

*F. C. College, Diamond Harbour, 24th Pgs.*

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## **A NOTE ON SAYALA FESTIVAL AMONG THE BAGDIS OF HOOGHLY DISTRICT**

Ceremonial friendship is present in a number of castes and communities in different parts of India. This type of friendship is also seen in a remote village of Hooghly. Through the ceremony, an artificial relationship is established between two parties not belonging to the same kin.

In this paper an attempt has been made to discuss a friendship making ceremony or 'Sayala', among the Bagdis of Hooghly of District West Bengal. This type of friendship plays an important role in social life and brings cooperation among different groups.

The material was collected in 1963 from the village Pilkhan, under Khanakul P. S. about 28 miles south-west of Tarakeswar station, in the District of Hooghly. The total population of this village is about 2,000 comprising of different castes. Agriculture is their primary occupation.

The villagers of Pilkhan worship the Goddess Manasa in order to win her grace for their safety from snake-bite. The local belief is that when she becomes angry with anybody, she orders her assistants to take revenge. Generally, the arrangement of the festival is done by the Bagdi. The *ojha* or *gunin* (who cures snake-bite) who belongs to Bagdi community fixes up the date of the festival in this village and announces the date of performance of the ceremony in other adjacent villages also.

### **Restriction :**

If any child-birth or death occurs in the village just before the beginning of the festival, the place of worship is shifted to some other neighbouring village; and sometimes the date of the festival is arranged after 3 days or 10 days in case of birth of a baby or death of a person respectively. The idea behind this is that the whole village is supposed to be polluted with birth or death. Even the air is not pure within this period. So unless the pollution period is over or the place is changed, the purpose of the worship will not be effective. During the festival period, cutting of hair, washing of clothes, ploughing, even pairing of nails are totally prohibited among the villagers. The festival continues for three days; but the ceremony of welcome and making friends is held only on the first day. Sometimes it continues for four or five days at the request of the local people.

### **Fixation of the date :**

Before the festival, the Ojha invites a meeting among his assistants to fix up a date. The date is generally fixed either on tuesday or on saturday morning on the appearance of the new moon of any month. after the lapse of 3 years of the previous festival.

### **Preparation of the festival :**

Two or three days before the occurrence of the festival, the place of the Goddess is cleared by removing small grass and dust particles. Finally, the place is besmeared with a mixture of cow-dung, mud and water for clearance and purification. No idols or images of Manasa are used but a twig of Manasa (cactus) which represents the abode of the diety is planted. An earthen mound is prepared around to twig where an earthen pitcher containing water and a mango twig which is termed as 'ghat' and other necessary articles can easily be placed. The festival ground is also cleared by sweeping and covered with samiana on bamboo frame. The Ojha and his assistants begin to collect rice and money from their own village by singing songs on 'Manasa'. Sometimes, the Ojha keeps a snake on his shoulder to prove himself an expert in snake charming and expects better collection from the villagers.

### **The ceremony :**

The stalls of various types, blacksmiths, potters, stationers, grocers, sweetmeats, tea, etc. come from distant villages two or three days before the actual date of the festival. Besides, these, many petty traders selling mostly indigeneous articles come every day for daily sale. The shops of garlands of flowers or necklaces of reeds are arranged in a row in one corner of the festival ground. In the central place (Ashana) of the festival ground, one party sings songs of Manasa from mourning to evening. The people of different castes and ages begin to assemble in the festival ground at 2 p. m. after taking their lunch. But in the afternoon (i.e. 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.) *sayala* (making friends) is started by exchanging garlands and sweetmeats. Sometimes they select their partners before the festival and the performance only is done in the ceremonial place. But majority of them choose their partners in the festival place. Even exchanging of garlands forcibly are not uncommon among them. Either they come alone or with party for making friendship. At first, exchange of garlands takes place, then both the parties offer sweets among them. Exchange of vermillion is done among the married women only. Generally, the type of friendship takes place among the same sexes and age groups. Sometimes age factor is not the main criterion. There is no caste differentiation for mak-

ing friendship. Lower caste people can establish friendship with higher caste people. But in case of widows, exchange of flowers, in lieu of garlands is noticed. The frequencies of different forms of friendship which took place in a particular festival is given below.

### Forms of friendship :

TABLE 1  
Frequency of the forms of friendship

Sl. No	Forms (types)	Number (pairs)
1.	Friendship between the unmarried women of the same age	... 8 Pairs
2.	Friendship between the married women with unmarried women of different ages	... 2 ..
3.	Friendship between the married women of same age	... 4 ..
4.	Friendship between the widows	... 3 ..
5.	Friendship between the persons of the same age	... 8 ..
6.	Friendship between the persons	... 4 ..
Total		... 29 ..

The women used to address themselves as "sai" while the males are addressed by each other as "Sanga."

We provide another table in the next page that provides facts of friendship between 73 pairs of friends who belong to different castes and sects.

From the table 2 it is evident that out of 73 pairs of friendships, 33 pairs were made between the same castes, while the rest were formed between the different castes. 33 pairs were formed among the males and 40 pairs are involved only females. It is interesting to note that Shri Ambika Chakraborty, a Brahmin, has a *sangat* friend named Gopal Malik, a Bagdi man.

Hetrosexual friendship was never found to occur. The case presented Table 1 and 2 were observed during the festival taken place in the month of March, 1963.

### PATTERN OF BEHAVIOUR AMONG THE FRIENDS :—

After making friends, the persons try to behave each other like their actual relatives. Many kinds of goods such as new clothes, sweets, vegetables, etc., are regularly exchanged among them on festival occasion. Invitations are also sent to such friends during festival period or any ceremonial occasion. Parents of two friends are looked upon their own parents. Elder brothers and sisters of the two friends are called "Dada" and "Didi" respectively. Children of the two friends look



upon one another as brother and sister. They share even sorrows during mourning periods.

TABLE 2

**Friendship between the same or different castes with respect to sex :**

Sl. No.	Group's Combinations	Number (pairs)	Sex	
			M + M	F + F
1.	Brahmin x Brahmin	10	3	7
2.	Brahmin x Kayastha	3	1	2
3.	Brahmin x Teli	2	—	2
4.	Brahmin x Bagdi	1	1	—
5.	Brahmin x Goala	2	1	1
6.	Brahmin x Mahishya	1	—	1
7.	Kayastha x Kayastha	6	4	2
8.	Kayastha x Teli	2	1	1
9.	Kayasthan x Sadgope	1	—	1
10.	Kayastha x Mahishya	3	2	1
11.	Kayastha x Goala	1	1	—
12.	Kayastha x Bagdi	1	1	—
13.	Kayastha x Tanti	2	1	1
14.	Teli x Teli	5	2	3
15.	Teli x Baishnab	1	1	—
16.	Teli x Mahishya	3	2	1
17.	Teli x Sadgoup	1	1	—
18.	Teli x Bagdi	2	1	1
19.	Teli x Tanti	1	—	1
20.	Teli x Goala	1	1	—
21.	Mahishya x Mahishya	6	2	4
22.	Mahishya x Bagdi	2	—	2
23.	Mahishya x Tanti	1	1	—
24.	Bagdi x Bagdi	10	4	6
25.	Bagdi x Tanti	3	1	2
26.	Bagdi x Goala	2	1	1
Total		73	33	40

**Conclusion :**

This type of friendship cuts accross caste barries and makes inter-caste relations stronger. After making friendships, visits and return visits are made by the friends with exchange of gifts

Brahmins do not take boiled rice in the house of the people of lower caste as a rule. Sometimes they take boiled rice to a house of lower castes prepared by a Brahmin cook. But they take meals in the same row with the people of lower caste during festival occasions only in the friend's house. This type of friendship strengthens inter-caste relations day by day by maintaining social solidarity.

*Anthropological Survey of India, Calcutta*

HARISH CHANDRA PRASAD

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K. RADHA KRISHNA MURTY

## THE PSYCHOLOGY OF FOLK SOCIETY AND ITS SONGS

In sociological and social anthropological literature, the concept of folk-society is given a considerable place. In fact many of the classical sociologists and social anthropologists devoted their attention to the change of society from that of folk to urban type, and the consequent impact of rapid urbanisation and industrialization on the folk-culture. Redfield<sup>1</sup> has illustrated elaborately the characteristics of a folk-society and the processes of change along the folk-urban continuum.

### **Nature of folk-society :**

Folk-society consists of sparse population which are inter-related and interdependent. Being small in size, this society is completely isolated from the developed societies. The people are homogeneous in their nature with a strong sense of social integration and solidarity. Their behaviour is traditional and customs, values, mores influence and control the activities of individuals. Folk society is a sacred society. The individual's status is largely based upon ascribed system. Primary and face to face relationships are maintained by the individuals. Kinship is a dominant factor and sometimes fictitious or jocular relationships play an important role. We can find in this type of society what Durkheim calls "Mechanic solidarity." Slight division of labour and specialization appears in this folk-society. Joint family can equally enjoy the common property. According to Kroeber<sup>2</sup> "Narrowness, depth, and intensity are the qualities of folk-cultures." The people show much faith in supernatural things and magic. Their predominant occupation is farming and fishing. But at the same time they can do several other crafts. Here it is apt to quote MacIver's statement<sup>3</sup> that "the individual is in constant contact with nature not as the artist in aesthetic appreciation, nor as the scientist who seeks to know her secrets for their own sake but as the practical worker who must wrest a living from the soil."

1. Redfield : "Little community."

2. A. L. Kroeber : "Anthropology", page 2882.

3. R. M. MacIver and C. H. Page "Society—An introductory Analysis.

From this type of folk-society, there develops a supreme product namely, folk-culture which consists of songs, dances and other contents of lore. So, society is the over all building structure from which culture grows. And the culture in turn determines the behaviour and quality of the folk. So, to Howard W. Odum<sup>4</sup> "folk is the constant element for bridging the distance between the two."

But industrialization, modernization, and urbanization are likely to have an adverse effect on the folk-lore especially the folk-songs. folk-customs, age old traditions and values are neglected, ignored and modernised Western culture is completely imitated by a number of developing societies. The changing economic and educational conditions and the influence of Western culture indicate that if the present day folk-songs of the country are to be preserved, they must be collected and interpreted now. When the folk-songs are no more heard or recorded, the sociological understanding of the ethos and continuity of the values of a society and its culture seems rather difficult.

### **Nature of folk-songs :**

The folk-songs are those songs having a popular character and habitually sung by the people. These songs rest on a combination of ethical and social principles. That is why these are the instruments round which the social and ethical systems rotate. Once the Editor of the E. P. New York writes in stating the reason of the creation of folk-songs : "A life of isolation without books or newspapers, telephone or radio, breeds songs and ballads. The gamut of human experience has been portrayed through this unrecorded literature of the people. These people had no literary conventions to uphold. But they were lonely, sad or glad and they sought diversions."

The first and foremost feature of the folk-songs is that there exists no author or poet. It is the combined effort of the folk. Even though in some cases the writer writes the songs, he does not care to mention his name at all. He is just like the anonymous sculptor who even does not mention his name and place. The reason why the folk-songs do not go after any composer is aptly described in the following quotation. "Mr. Khiti Mohan Sen once asked a Baul why is it that they make no effort to preserve the names of the composers of their songs. The elderly Baul, pointing first to the full river where boats were passing under sail and then to the almost dry canal, where boats stood on the

4. Howard W. Odum's selected papers : Folk-Region and Society.

mud, answered "Do the boats under full sail leave any trace of their passage? The track of the boat being pushed along the canal is marked plainly in the mud. Which is the simpler and more natural way? Ours is the simple way. The leaving of foot-prints is artificial and unimportant."<sup>5</sup> So the proper tribute of the author is its continuity in the heart and memory of the people. That is why folk-songs became the joint property of all. Just like water, wind and light they must be enjoyed by all. There are no rights and claims for a folksongs and individual. Whereas in the classical literature there is the author and he claims full rights and liberty over any changes or alternatives of his work. But here the verses of the folk-songs are composed on the spur of the moment by various participants. This is what we call the communal composition. "A song made in this way is no man's property and has no individual author. The folk is its author."<sup>6</sup>

The next important nature of the folk-songs is its social heritage. The term social heritage was used by Graham Wallas to signify "the knowledge and expedients and habits which are socially transmitted, being handed down from generation to generation through social participation and education."<sup>7</sup> So several things like art, myths, songs, traditions etc., are left by old men and the younger ones are imbibing and preserving them ones. This is simply going on by the process of socialization. "Thus the tools that man uses, the art he creates the Gods he worships, his courtship and marriage practices his very ideas are dependent on his social heritage."<sup>8</sup> Thus, by means of social heritage the songs are handed down from singer to singer without aid of any print.

Folk-songs are dynamic and flexible in their nature. They are willing to change along the way of travel according to the needs or creativeness of any particular singer or group. There is no perfect and complete structure and shape to these songs. Whereas in the classical literature the author predetermines the clearcut structure and base to his theme and frames the ideas. But the folk-song can take various shapes and styles by passing through various hands. So omissions and commissions are commonly found in the folk-songs. "It follows that a genuinely popular ballad can have no fixed and final form, no sole authentic version. There are texts but there is no text."<sup>9</sup>

5. *The March of India—Mystic Minstrels of Bengal*, Vol. III, No. 1, Sept-Oct., 1952.

6. G. L. K. in *English and Scottish Ballads* of F. J. Child.

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9. F. J. Child : "English and Scottish Ballads".

Time factor is the next feature of the folk-songs. We cannot determine the date and year in which these songs came into existence. They never have any ascertainable date. When we are in doubt of how old is that folk-song? We can clear off our doubt by seeing the appropriate reply given by a Western poet—"A folk-song is neither new nor old because it is continually taking on new life, it is an individual flowering on a common stem."<sup>10</sup>

A further limitation of the folk-song must be mentioned, namely that it survives by oral tradition. In certain remote societies and tribes people are found without skill to read or write. Such type of people express their feelings by means of songs and dances in common gatherings. These events are of quite local origin and present common interest to the folk. So songs and dances are useful in the process of communicating their ideas, feelings and aptitudes. Again through the process of listening and learning, these songs are surviving.

Folksongs have their own independent and original styles. The songs are easy to learn and the folk can very easily catch the style. The composers as well as the singers of these songs do not worry about grammar. Refrain is common and interesting in these songs. When one individual is singing, the remaining people at that spot may catch the refrain at the end of each verse. This we can observe in the labour or work songs. For example, Bee songs, boat songs etc. When the people are doing like this they can forget their manual labour and feel as if they are enjoying the work actually.

Finally, the main theme of these songs consists of the life, aims, objectives, values, joys and sorrows of the common folk. Sometimes these songs also carry the themes of historical and epic times. Any way the themes clearly reflect the social, economic, political and cultural conditions of the people. They could either be comedies or tragedies. The composer with his simplicity of thought selects the subject which can provoke the people with various thought patterns namely, philosophical, metaphysical, devotional, romantic, thrill, wonder, imagination, melancholic and even pathetic moods. So, ultimately, "A Nation reborn must be inspired by its folk-songs."<sup>11</sup>

### **Conclusion :**

Thus folk songs contain a language which is highly personalised and emotion packed. Again knowledge gained through such devices will not only be quickly acquired, and understood but also remembered

10. R. V. W.—The Encyclopaedia Britannica.

11. Devendra Satyarthi : The illustrated weekly of India, November, 12 (1944).

long. Thus they have great potentialities of communication in promoting social change and social development. These advantages should be properly utilised in community development involving particularly rural or folk communities.

Note : The author acknowledges the influence of the book "Telugu Janapada Geya Sahityamu" by Dr. B. Rama Raju, on his analysis of the character of folk songs.

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KENNETH DE COURCY LOW

**THE GOBLIN'S HOUSE**

Once upon a time, the king of a strange and now forgotten country went hunting in a dark forest near the sea-shore. The king's name was Rua and he took with him his son Toka and a number of other boys. Toka decided to go swimming with some of his companions while his father hunted in the forest; but when the king returned from his hunting excursion, he discovered that the young prince was not with his friends.

"Where is my son?" asked the king.

"He swam far out into the sea with us, 'answered one of the boys,' and he never came back. We fear the Sea-Goblins have taken him, for darkness had fallen and many dark, mysterious shapes pursued us as we swam for the shore."

The king was filled with grief at this doleful news.

"Alas!" he cried, 'my beloved son, taken away from me by the wicked Sea-Goblins. I am full of sadness. What will I do?"

As he walked dejectedly along the rocks by the shore, the king's mind was filled with agitation. Suddenly, raising his hands above his head, he called out in a loud voice:

"O' Spirit of the Ocean, tell me what has become of my son, so that I may know what to do!"

Almost immediately after this plea, a strange thing happened. A large column of mist rose out of the sea like a water-spout, and it towered high up in the air like a creature half-serpent and half-man. As the king rubbed his eyes in astonishment, in the centre of the huge misty form there appeared a shining but faint vision of his son. The king spoke again:

"I can see my son; a mighty form appears to bring him back to me across the ocean. I can see him, but how frail and faint his figure looks. Speak to me...speak to me...the vision is like the ghost of my son, not like his real self at all. Speak to me."

In dismal tones the form in the centre of the whirling mist answered the king.

"You are right father," said the ghostly form of the boy, 'what you

can see is not my real self but the shadow of my true being. When I was out bathing in the ocean with the other boys, I felt myself suddenly grabbed by a number of strong hands and dragged under the waves. I



A Statue of a Maori Girl of Newzealand

am now a captive in the dark, cold, underwater dungeons where the Sea-Goblins live. Help me...help me...save me from this terrible fate!"

The voice, together with the mist, faded away as quickly as it had appeared and the pathetic shadow of Toka's form sank back into the turbulent sea.

But now the king knew what he was to do. His sorrow was replaced by anger as he marched in a determined manner down the beach and shouted above the roar of the waves :

"Now I know my duty. I will plunge into the ocean and search the caverns of the mighty deep until I find my son. Luckily I have one magic gift, it is the power to breathe underwater. I cannot drown. I will never rise to the surface until I find my son and punish the Sea-Goblins for their dastardly act."

Boldly the king plunged through the foaming breakers, and soon he reached the bottom of the sea. The darkness down there was so intense that many times he stumbled and often he was attacked by weird slimy creatures that writhed and curled around his body. He managed to fight off these vicious denizens of the deep, and all through the night he passed resolutely through deep hollows and over wave-beaten hills.

In the morning great beams of light from the sun, illuminated the floor of the ocean and revealed to the king's astonished gaze, a very strange scene. Before him stretched a wide greenish looking plain over which, fishes of all sizes, shapes and colours swam in perpetual motion. In the middle of this under-water plain stood a large rambling old wooden house decorated with many hideous carvings in the shape of sinister creatures of the sea like serpents and sharks. Intuitively the king knew that this building was the home of the goblins. For a moment or two he paused and gazed fixedly at the scene in front of him and as he did so, there came to his ears, the sound of a soft pleading voice. It was Prince Toka again calling for assistance :

"Help! Help! I am the prisoner of the Sea Goblins," cried the voice. "Help! It is dark and miserable here and I will never see the light of day again unless I can escape from the clutches of my wicked captors."

As the voice faded away, he king said to himself :

"That was indeed my son's voice, and right in front of me is the Sea-Goblins house where he is held prisoner. I move in closer and closer... what is this I see? My heart stands still with horror. There is a life-like figure of my son standing over the doorway. The Goblins have turned his body into wood and set it up as an ornament for their house. So that is why they stole him, to make a statue of his body and imprison his soul in their foul home."

Electrified by this realisation, the king dashed into the house, but



no one was there. The rooms, decorated with repulsive paintings and carvings, were all empty and silent. He rushed out again and was startled to see an old woman dressed in a long garment made of green sea-weed coming towards him.

He walked up to the astonished woman and asked :

"Where are the Sea-Goblins?"

"They are far away in the deepest caves of the ocean, 'came the reply ; 'but who are you sir, that dares to come near the goblins' home?"

"Never mind who I am, 'replied the king.' The goblins have killed my son and set his body over the door-way. Point out the track that leads to where the vile creatures are, so that I may sweep to my revenge."

A bright light came into the woman's eyes when she heard these fighting words :

"Ah !" she exclaimed, 'At last...at last someone has come to destroy these wicked beings. Stay here and I will tell you about a plan I have and I will certainly do all in my power to help bring the goblins to justice. I know the land from whence you have come because once I lived there myself. One day, long long ago, I was out on the sea with my husband in a fishing boat. A great storm came up and the sky turned black as ink. Just as we turned about to make for the shore, a dozen or more strong arms rose above the angry waves and dragged our boat under the water. We were captured by the goblins who killed my husband, but they kept me as a door-keeper for their house.

I wept over your handsome son, 'continued the woman, 'when they brought him down, but being old and frail I couldn't do anything to help him, but I am more than willing to aid you in punishing the goblins."

"Then 'said the king eagerly,' tell me about the plan you mentioned."

"Listen, my friend,' said the woman, 'the goblins cannot bear the light of day. When sun-light falls on them it kills them instantly. All the hours when the sun penetrates down on to this plain, they spend in the darkest ocean caves. When night comes, they return to the house to eat and sleep. I keep watch at the door and my task is to waken them when the first light of dawn appears so that they may leave the house before the sun-light enter."

"Yes, yes,' cried he king impatiently, "but the plan, tell me about the plan!"

"I am coming to that,' answered the woman. 'In the roof of the house are many cracks through which the day-light streams. You,

being strong, can climb upon the slippery roof and fill the cracks so as to shut out the light. While they are asleep we can also block the doors and windows and every crack around them. Then, when morning comes, the house will be dark. The goblins will think it is still night and will sleep on. When the sun is strong and bright, we shall open the door and the light will kill them."

"Your plan is a good one," said the king. "Let us begin to execute it at once."

So the pair busied themselves gathering wood, and then, climbing on the roof of the house, the king filled the crevices until no light could enter through the chinks. He next climbed round the walls and stuffed every crack with wood and sea-weed. When his task was finished, the old woman said :

"That is good . . . the job has been well done. We must hide now because the sun is sinking fast and darkness is setting in . . . my cruel masters will soon come home. The roof, the walls : the doors and windows have all been effectively blocked, and we have finished the work just in time because I can hear the goblins approaching us across the plain."

A tumult of shouting and screaming reached the king's ears as he hid behind a corner of the old house. Pushing each other and quarrelling angrily, the ferocious creatures poured through the door-way into the house like a thick torrent of refuse and sacum.

For about another hour the king listened to the sound of fierce arguments coming from inside the house as the goblins fought among themselves. Then there was a welcome silence. The enchantress sleep had overcome the vicious little beings.

To the anxious king, the night seemed as if it would never end ; but at last the first faint streaks of day-light appeared. Brighter and brighter shone the light ; but still the goblins slept, for inside the house it was still as dark as a tomb. At last one of the creatures awoke and in a raspy tone of voice said :

"The night is a long one. Isn't it morning yet old woman ?"

"Sleep on, 'answered the woman,' I will let you know when the dawn comes. It is still night. Sleep on."

Turning to his helper, the king whispered :

"The sun is now high in the sky above the boundless blue ocean and his beams are shining down into these watery depths with brightness and power."

"Then, 'cried he woman,' LET IN THE LIGHT !"

She immediately flung open the door and at the same time the king tore away the coverings from the cracks and windows. The

raging sun-light streamed into the house and fell on the goblins. Mad with fear they covered their eyes with hairy elbows and hands and tried to rush outside, but as soon as they reached the door they fell down dead in the face of the full strength of the light. Not one was left alive.

Turning to the king, the old woman said :

"That was well done. Life will be better now because the world is rid of a cruel pest."

"I will burn down the house," shouted the king. "No evil thing shall live in it again ; but first I will lift down the wooden figure of my poor son. He shall be carried home."

With sorrowful tenderness he lifted down the small statue and placed it gently in a cloak of sea-weed. Then he set fire to the house. He knew the secret of making fire even under water, and soon the house was a raging inferno. Tongues of red flame curled and twisted like serpents in pain, and an umbrella of golden sparks hovered over the doomed building.

As the king stood beside the old woman watching the flames perform round quickly and there to his astonishment and delight stood the handsome figure of his son Toka. The young man, no longer a wooden statue, but a living, flesh-covered, vital being smiled at his father and said :

"My beloved father, your bravery has saved my life and restored my form to its normal proportions. My soul has been freed from its prison and the fire has melted the chains that bound me in a dungeon of darkness and death."

The king embraced his son, and in his heart he felt an overwhelming gratitude towards the Great Power that had revealed a way to release his son from what had seemed to be a hideous fate.

Together with his son and the old woman, the king made his way back through deep domains of the sea and eventually the small party reached the dry land again. The brilliant golden orb of the sun shone down on them from his throne on high and filled their hearts with gladness and hope.

## EDITORIAL

It is well-known that the position of women in a society is a fair index of the excellence of its culture and civilization. It is a therefore, necessary to make an objective study of the womanhood to know a land, her people and society. Scientific analysis of the position, status, etc. of the womenfolk is also necessary for better understanding of a community, their social and family life and for the successful outcome of the struggle waged by the progressive forces against some primitive attitude of the women and the ancient ideology and old values. This struggle includes the exposure of barbarism which now, as before, is a means by which the hostile classes try to influence the proletariat. And, when it is remembered what a wealth of material folklore supplies in connection with every concern of daily life, it is not surprising that woman should have been made a prominent theme for criticism and comment.

There is no doubt that things are moving in India." Besides Mrs. Indira Gandhi other ladies are also occupying high posts in the government as ministers and deputy ministers. And if one enters an Indian office, it is not seldom that one finds a lady as the director who has as a staff of male employees under her. Our Prime Minister Indira Gandhi has just come out successful after having gone through a period of political struggles and difficult discussions without having deviated from her course and without showing signs of vacillation. Her policies are characterised by the absence of any hesitation during decisive moments. Perhaps she is today the most loved and most criticized woman in her country. But neither friend nor foe can deny her the due respect. She has proved her power.

In India women are considered as *Sakti* or the forces of men. Stresses should be made here to view women with their motherly attitude, sisterly affection, partnerly love, and again, their roles as mother, step-mother, wife, co-wife, widow, sister, daughter, further as maiden, working women, as a leader in different organisations and so forth. It has been observed that women by virtue of their sacrifice, service, love, sentiment, shyness, attitude and treatment toward mankind have acquired such powers and positions that have led them to rule home government and family life in general. By their gentle touch, devotion, and capacity for basic teaching, nurshing, and domestic work they are essential for the improvement of human society. Hence they need to be better understood, better educated, since it is they who train the future generation.

It is rightly said by our Prime Minister that "Our women are strong-minded." Indira Gandhi, who neither by her age nor by her sex seems to have a right to hold a post which normally is held by elder gentlemen, is a rare phenomenon or whether her position signifies the changing role of women in India.

Thus they are advised to be polite, calm, cool, gentle, chaste and honest in the way they are conscious about their beauty, dress, hair and tongue. Women's goodness, their love, their hate, their secrets, their blushes, their tear are their strength. It is the women who by their thought and action can help to raise the tone of human society and train us to live with one another in harmony, peace and friendship.

The Prime Minister knows innumerable villages out of nearly 500,000 villages in India in which about 80% of the total population lives. "Even the women who cannot read or write have concrete ideas about their lives, have desires and hopes and think about things far beyond the narrow limits of their existence," remarked Mrs. Gandhi with a lot of feeling. "If one wants to convince them, they just proudly shake their heads. They do not contradict loudly and do not become impetuous, they however stick to their purpose. But they are successful because they are strong-minded and thus unperturbed." Then she does not smile any more and repeats: "We need strong-mindedness in our country. In all its aspects, India is a complex country. But if I would have to characterise the women of my country I must say that one quality is common to all of them: They are strong-minded."

In discussing all these one should also discuss *sati*, *kulaism*, *purdah*, child-marriage, widow-remarriage, polygamy, *dowry* system, class-struggles, conflicts and others. It is also necessary to trace, whether under foreign domination the status and position of women of India deteriorated or whether the policy of the foreign governments were guided in the interest of the powers and in favour of the privileged classes only, or they wanted to do some good for the masses also, if so, willingly or under pressure.

There are many more acute problems which are facing our society today such as caste spirit, the communal rancour, struggles between different classes of people which we have to fight with the help of all and with the help of women on all fronts. From this idea the question of women's emancipation have arisen and got popularity but it has been observed that inspite of women's emancipation and participation in different professions and activities it would be premature to believe that their emancipation is being rapidly or easily accomplished.

**IF  
WE ARE  
OF ONE HEART,  
WE ARE BOUND  
TO  
SUCCEED**

"\*Better life for the millions can come only through sustained hard work. Bengal's large and small industries must run without interruption and produce work and wealth for more and more people. Unemployment can be solved only if our economy expands. Anything that hinders our recovery and growth is a disservice to youth and to the future of Bengal.

The revolution of which Bengal and India have dreamed, is a revolution of ideas, of attributes, of skills and of techniques. Our transformation must flow from our own genius. It can come about not by violence or lawlessness but only through order, good will and peace.

At all times we must remember that the people are above all parties. Those who labour in the field, the factory and the office, the charming women, the bright-eyed children, the dynamic youth, the alert intelligentsia and the middle class who have formed the backbone of all movements—these are the people of Bengal. We must not jeopardise their interests in fighting for our own.

These are the qualities on which they must draw to face the present difficulties. The path is perilous. But if we are of one heart, and if we are guided by the undying heritage of Bengal, we are bound to succeed."

Indira Gandhi  
Prime Minister

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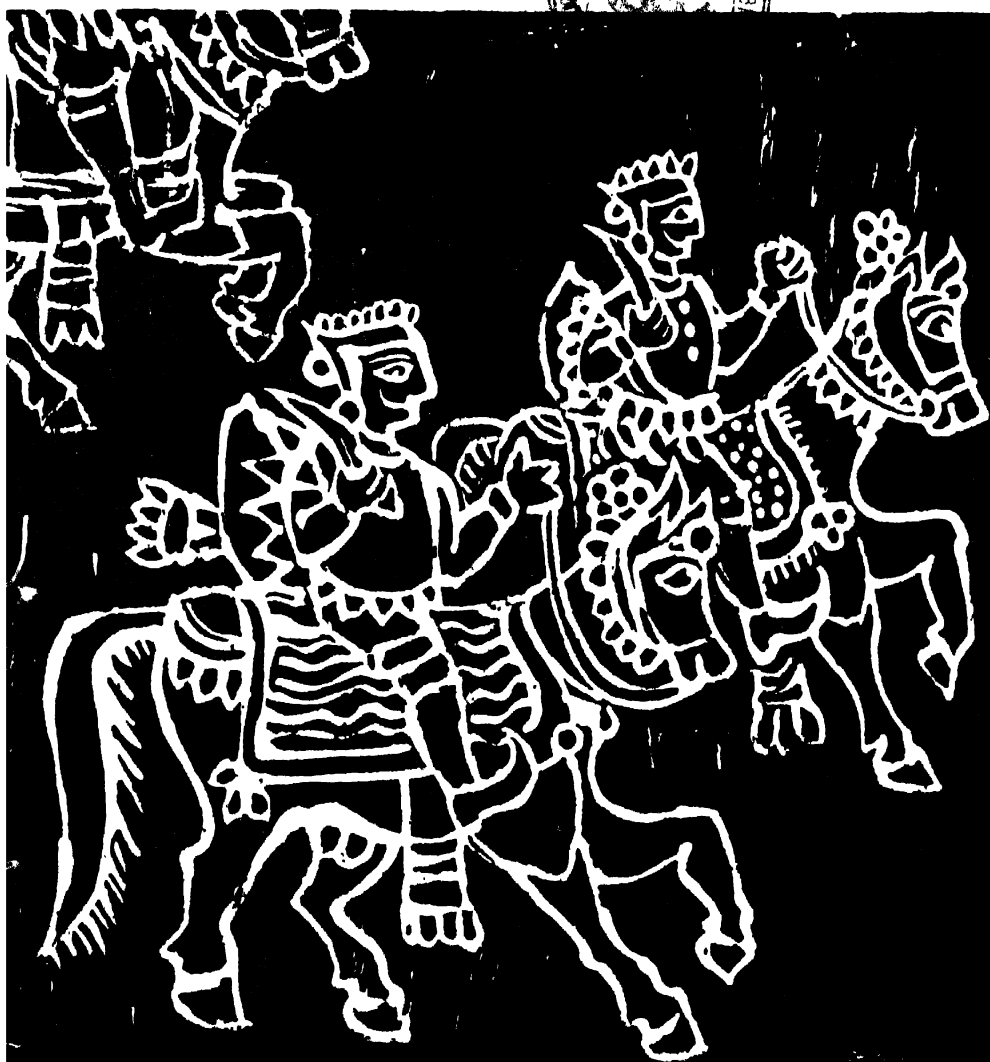
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# FOLKLORE

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PAUL G. HIEBER

## TREASURE-LORE IN INDIA'S GREAT AND LITTLE TRADITIONS

Through the rich tapestry of India's folklore run certain repeated themes. The perils of gambling, the sufferings and ultimate triumph of the innocent, the selfless devotion of saints, marriages by the choice of the bride (svayamvara), battles between good kings and evil which end as cosmic struggles when gods and demons enter the arena, transformations of men into other forms of nature, and the humanized world of talking animals, these are hallmarks of Indian tales from ancient times to the present.

One theme which finds widespread distribution throughout India and indeed throughout the world is that of hidden treasures. In India it is buried gold and gems, in the West the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. Similar tales have been reported from Mexico, Brazil and Italy.<sup>1</sup> In India these tales are common in the ancient lore of India's great tradition. They persist today in the villages amidst the widespread belief that such treasure can still be unearthed if one knows the proper sites and techniques for their extraction. But throughout the tales, whether from India's great or little traditions run certain

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recognizable themes when place their unique stamp upon Indian treasure tales.

## I. HIDDEN TREASURE IN INDIA'S GREAT TRADITION

The Jatakas are among the oldest collections of Indian tales. Adapted to Buddhist purposes and incorporated into the Pali canon, this collection of dry, terse stories is a commentary on morals and prudence in everyday life. Hidden treasures appear in a dozen of these stories<sup>2</sup> but one or two examples will suffice to illustrate the theme

### **Saccamkara-Jataka No.73<sup>3</sup>**

One day when the wicked prince and heir to the throne of Benares was bathing in a flood swollen river, the servants, thinking to rid themselves of an evil king, threw him into the torrent. Returning home with a display of grief, they claimed that the prince had disappeared in the storm. A thorough search was made, but no sign of the body was to be found.

The prince, however, had caught hold of a log floating by and there he took refuge with a snake, a rat and a parrot. Now the snake had been a rich merchant in his previous life and because of his cravings for money, he had been reborn to dwell amongst his buried treasure. Likewise the rat, who had hidden thirty crores of rupees in his previous existence, returned to grovel amidst the gold.

At this time the Bodhisatta was living as a hermit in the forest. Hearing the cries of the stranded prince, he came to the rescue. Warming and feeding first the animals, for they were weaker, and then the prince, he soon nurtured them back to health. As they departed each promised to aid the hermit when he called upon them. The snake and rat promised him their treasures, and the parrot the assistance of his many relatives in gathering rice from the far corners of the land. But the wicked prince, who resented the preference which the

References made to the Jatakas are taken from Cowell E. B. *The Jatakas: or Stories of the Buddha's Former Birth*, translated from Pali, Cambridge, University Press, 1895. Other stories referring to treasure are: Nanda Jataka, Khadirangara Jataka, Kancanak Kandha Jataka, Babbu Jataka, Jarudapana Jataka, Gamani-Canda Jataka, Palus Jataka, Brahachatta Jataka, Supparaka Jataka, Ruru Jataka, and Maha-Vanija Jataka.

*Ibid.* Book I, pp. 177-81.

Bodhisatta had shown the animals, vowed within himself to kill the godly man.

One day the hermit visited Benares. The prince, now king of the land, spied him and ordered the servants to behave him on the spot. When the people heard the commotion and listened to his story, they killed the ungrateful king and enthroned the hermit. He gathered together the treasures and lived happily with the animals to a ripe old age, doing good to all.

Another tale which points out other characteristics of the Indian treasure stories runs as follows :

### **Kundakapuva-Jataka No. 109**

Once upon a time the Bodhisatta appeared as a tree sprite. On a certain festival day when the villagers brought offerings of garlands, oil and sweet cakes to their respective sprites, the poor man, in whose tree the Bodhisatta dwelt, arrived with only a cake of husks and a coconut shell full of water — all he owned. Fearing that the sprite would despise so menial an offering, he turned to leave. But the Bodhisatta, in compassion, called him back. After receiving the offering, the sprite ordered the worthy man to dig around the tree for the pots of gold which lay buried there. As instructed, the poor man took these to the king who appointed him Lord Treasurer of the empire.

In Hindu lore, the *Panchatantra* ('Five Treatises') occupies a role similar to that of the Jatakas for Buddhism, unfolding the principles of right conduct (*dharma*) by means of a series of unfolding tales. These stories told by a wise sage to instruct the five foolish sons of a king entrusted to his care make repeated reference to hidden treasure.<sup>4</sup> In the story of Right-mind and Wrong-mind the corrupting nature of such treasure becomes apparent. In brief the story goes as follows :<sup>5</sup>

Once upon a time two friends, Right-mind and Wrong-mind, set out to seek their fortunes. In a distant land they found a pot of coins which had been buried years before by a saint. Taking the coins, the youths returned home to display their good fortunes. Nearing their city, the two began to argue over the disposition of the treasure.

4. An excellent translation is Ryder, A. W. *The Panchatantra*, Bombay : Jaico Publishing House. Other stories referring to treasure are Godly and June, I 50-53, The Sensible Enemy, I 170-173, The Snake Who Paid Cash, III 286-87, III Considered Action, V 367-71, and The Four Treasure-seekers, V 373-403.

5. *Ibid* pp. 158-163.

Right-mind suggested they divide it equally and take the coins home, but Wrong-mind, with an eye to getting a larger portion, suggested each take a small share and the balance be hidden until some later time of need. Wrong-mind prevailed and the two returned home.

After some years Wrong-mind, having used up his share in hand, devised a plan to get hold of all of the remaining money. After secretly removing the buried coins, he summoned Right-mind to dig up and divide the treasure. Finding the pot empty, Wrong-mind loudly accused Right-mind of the theft and dragged him to court. As proof for his charges, Wrong-mind appealed to the spirit which lived in an old tree beside the hiding place.

The following day the judge went to hear the testimony of the tree. To his astonishment, a voice from within the tree testified to the guilt of Right-mind. While the perplexed judge pondered over a suitable punishment for the culprit, Right-mind gathered up brushwood, heaped it around the tree and set it aflame. The anguished cries of Wrong-mind's aged father hiding in the hollow trunk betrayed the ruse and Wrong-mind was hanged.

Such stories are not completely unfounded for kings and wealthy folk did bury treasures for safekeeping, or when their cities were besieged. Salim, son of the great Mughal ruler Akbar, and himself later the Emperor Jahangir, wrote concerning his father :<sup>6</sup>

"Notwithstanding his kingship, his treasures and *his buried wealth past computation*, his fighting elephants and Arab horses, he never by a hair's breadth placed his foot beyond the base of humility before the Throne of God, and never for one moment forgot Him." (Italics mine).

Patrons were thought to have buried large treasures during construction of dams and temples, the wealthy to have hidden gold in their fields or homes.

## II. TREASURE LORE IN INDIA'S LITTLE TRADITION

Rumours of hidden treasure are common throughout India's villages. Children of the south, looking up at the stars at night, see in the four major stars of Ursa Major (called the Big Dipper in the west) the four posts of the miserly merchant's bed beneath which lie buried his gold. Nearby the three thieves are creeping up to steal it. Old men in the shade of the village tree tell stories of thieves who dug through the mud walls of huts during their own times. Young boys

Rawlinson, H. G.--*India : A Short Cultural History*, New York : Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1954. p. 318.

sheepishly recount their futile attempts to unearth pots of gold (*lunka bindelu*) in some nearby field, convinced that their failure lay not in the absence of these hoards, but in the dawn which drove them from the field before the money was unearthed, or in their failure to divine the right spot.

Carstairs refers to the prevalence of buried treasures in the dreams and daydreams of the villagers in Rajasthan.<sup>7</sup>

"The phantasy of acquiring sudden unexpected wealth was common in Deoli, as it is in the Western world; but here it presented itself in a peculiar form: the characteristic daydream (or actual dream) took the form of meeting a benevolent holy man, or a god-like stranger who would impart the secret of how to become rich, and who would remain an aloof, all-powerful, but beautiful figure, disappearing from the scene as abruptly as he came. Most often his instructions would be to go to such and such a place and dig, and treasure would be found. Rumours spread from time to time that this had actually happened to other people, and my informants all believed that this, or something like it, might happen to them one day."

Earlier Wiser noted<sup>8</sup> that in Karimpur, U.P., villagers hid their gold and silver in one of the walls or the floor of their homes.

The science for the location and proper extraction of hidden gold was apparently well developed. Throughout south India this knowledge was frequently recorded in the old palm-leaf books which can still be found in the villages. These manuscripts prescribed the proper procedures for the search for buried treasures. Because such treasures are often guarded by the reincarnation of their former owners, or by evil spirits, certain magical chants (*mantras*) and charm (*yentras*) are needed to protect the finder from harm. These magical rites are often spelled out in the old texts. A literal translation from one of the old palm-leaf manuscripts written in Telugu which were found in the village of Amrabad, A. P., by the author during an extended study of the village illustrates the nature of such texts.<sup>9</sup>

### Prerequisites for the Exploration of Treasures

Saints of god, ascetics, mendicants, hermits, poets of divine inspiration, and such people are qualified to dig up a treasure hidden under-

7. Carstairs, G. M.—*The Twice-Born*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1967. p. 90.

8. Wiser, W. H. and C. V. Wiser—*Behind Mud Walls*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964. p. 144.

9. This is only a short extract from a rather lengthy manuscript.

ground. Only people void of base impulses such as hatred and pride, those who do not swerve from the path of truth and those who practice penance should venture out for treasures. Swarthy and tall people, abnormally sized ones, physically, are divinely ordained for such purposes. They should be bold and courageous, interested in divine oracles, devotees of Siva, self-controlled. Those who are untrustworthy, filled with guile, unfaithful in religious rituals, covetous and stealthy, gossips and scandalmongers, these should not be taken into such ventures. Moreover, people who sleep during the day, like owls, and keep awake at night should not accompany the devotee on his expedition. Paupers, sicklings and sinners, if they so much as see the ceremony, the treasure will never appear.

Now there are specific places where one can expect a treasure : (1) old reservoirs, (2) old and antiquated gardens, (3) burial and cremation grounds, (4) places of religious pilgrimage and interest, (5) places haunted by celestial beings and demi-gods, (6) in rock pillars of old buildings, and (7) caves wherein hermits lived. These are the places where you are sure to excavate treasures.

Particularly one should look in temple ruins where idols lie broken and devastated. In such places, look for these signs to be sure a treasure is present. If the head of the idol is chopped off, look near the hands. Ten marks there will show you that a treasure lies within. If the thigh is broken, search beneath the hand for one of the following signs. Six marks, black spots, somewhere on the body of the image, is a sign that you can find six hundred gold coin within . . . If the idol stands on one foot, you can be certain a treasure lies buried beneath it. If the statue depicts the rider of a horse, or has a horse face, undoubtedly it covers a treasure. If there is a fox or a mongoose carved on the idol, sacrifices must be offered before the treasure is removed. An Avis flower must be well ground, made into a lump and applied while chanting the *Pundarika mantra*. It must be smeared the head or onto the ground. Immediately the treasure will be revealed.

If the idol is eight handed, it has a treasure beneath. Certain herbs must be used. The bitter cucumber (*bira*), the prickly poppie (*bhramadani*), and the thorn apple (*unmmetha*) must be ground well and smeared onto the earth. The *mantra* to be chanted on this occasion is the invoking the god Ranga. 'Om, oh Ranga, presiding deity over treasure, dispeller of obstacles, svaha.' . . . . .

If the idol is made of white marble or black, treasure is surely at hand. If a holy lotus is carved upon it, there is added certainty. The herbs prescribed are the Avis flower, and the bark of the same plant which has been ground into opium. The chant is, "Om, phut, phut.

*Break open, oh earth, oh destroyer of the three elements."* This must be chanted while applying the ointment, and the stone will break.

If the statue is that of Chinmaya, god of internal bliss, if the statue shows him to be clothed with silk, you must break open the stomach to find the treasure. Apply to the stomach of the figure the following herbs ground into an ointment ; long peppers, black peppers, and cow's urine. A *mantra* should be chanted at the time to give strength to the ointment so that the stomach will be broken. "*Om, namo, Bhagavathe* (To you, oh god), *Vasudevaya* (a name given to Krishna), *Anjana vishvarupena* (Anjana revealed in his universal form), *nirgunana gunaathmanaa, chetham bhagavathenaa, paarenaaloka-dhaarana*, (Oh Nirguna without form, who takes form at pleasure. Oh protector of the world) "*Om, svaha.*" This *mantra* is used to break the unbreakable.

Several unique patterns appear repeatedly in the Indian treasure lore. (1) Hidden treasures are plentiful, buried in the past by kings, merchants, thieves or demons. They lie at particular sites which can be defined by a correct reading of various signs and omens. (2) Such treasures are frequently guarded and care must be taken to extract them. Former owners who died with an overpowering greed for their gold are reborn as animals or spirits to reside near their money. Or watchful demons or curses may strike down to unwary seeker. To remove the treasure after it has been found, magical rituals are needed to guard the seeker from harm. If divination shows that demons are present, blood sacrifices may be necessary. (3) Treasures carry within them moral implications. They may be rewards to poor saints to repay years of innocent suffering, but they are blessings only so long as they are used for the welfare of others. In the hand of a miser they turn to curses. (4) Villagers have a strong appreciation for the miraculous. They lack the sharp conceptual dichotomy between natural and supernatural which pervades the West. Gods, men and animals interact upon a single universal stage in the different scenes of successive lives.

### III. TREASURE TALES AND THEIR FUNCTION

Folk tales serve certain obvious functions in the Indian culture, namely entertainment and moral instruction. There is no sharp dichotomy between religion and entertainment. Entertainment generally has religious themes and religious activities provide much of the villagers' entertainment. Indian folk tales illustrate well this harmonious merging of entertainment and religious instruction.

A more unique function for treasure tales is suggested by Foster in



connection with the "Image of the Limited Good."<sup>10</sup> He suggests that peasants in many parts of the world view their resources, such as land, money, goods and friendships as limited in finite quantities for which all must strive. Hence one man's prosperity can come only at the expense of others. He becomes a threat to their own positions and must be stopped. In such a closed model, Foster adds, the only socially acceptable ways to acquire more resources is by tapping sources of wealth outside the system, sources such as hidden treasures.

An instance of such validation was recorded in Amrabad. According to the villagers the grandfather of the very wealthy moneylenders of Amrabad was a pauper, earning his livelihood by carting grind stones from the quarry in the forest to the village for export. While digging foundations for a house, he reportedly came across a pot of gold coins. He kept the matter hid, but by performing the right incantations, he managed to extract the treasure without harm. Today the family of moneylenders is extremely rich. Village lore has it that a rich man may erect a small gold cobra in the family shrine for every lak of rupees he buries in his house. Such wealth can not be used in business. The Amrabad moneylenders have one such cobra. But despite their high interest rates and hard bargaining, villagers attribute their prosperity to a stroke of good fortune.

Treasure tales provide a few with an accepted way to account for their prosperity. For the many, these tales provide a glimmer of hope that they, too, one day will find a pot of gold and enter the abundant life.

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## ON THE WOMEN OF INDIA

WOMEN IN INDIAN FOLKLORE—ed. Sankar Sen Gupta : : Foreword  
Smt. Indira Gandhi D/c ¼, about 400 p. (1969) Rs. 45.00 or \$ 9.00

A STUDY OF WOMEN OF BENGAL, by Sankar Sen Gupta, D/c ¼,  
about 405 p. (1970) Rs. 50 or \$ 9.50.

Indian Publications : : Calcutta-1 Ph. 23-6334

10. Foster, G. M.—"Peasant Society and the image of limited good," *American Anthropologist*, 1965, 67 : 293-315.

## CHILD BALLAD NUMBER 268 AND ITS COMPARABLE TALES IN INDIA

The ballad, the Twa Knights,<sup>1</sup> relates a story of a faithful woman whose chastity has been wagered by her husband.<sup>2</sup> This type of framework story is prevalent in all over the world.<sup>3</sup>

There is only one text of this ballad, and this is found only in Buchan's book.<sup>4</sup> Child has taken this ballad verbatim from this book. There are no other versions or variants available of the Twa Knights. So apparently it shows that the Twa Knights ballad as such is a recent composition. Presumably, the framework story of "The Twa Knights" has been taken from the folktales current among the people.

The story of the Twa Knight ballad is cited by Child in the following manner :

A Knight and a squire, sworn brothers,<sup>5</sup> have a talk about fair women. 'There's naw gude women but mine,' says the squire. 'My luck is the better,' replies the knight, 'that one of them is mine.' The

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1 F. J. Child *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* Vol. V. No. 268. pp. 21-28.

2 Motif, No. N 15; Chastity Wager. A man makes a wager on his wife's chastity. In spite of unsuccessful attempts to seduce her and of false proofs presented, he wins the wager. N 26; wife as wager. N 11; wager on wife's complacency, K 15121; Cut off finger proves wife's chastity.

Ath Tale Type No. 882

3. Kohler--Bolte 1, 211 f, 375. 581.

G. Paris Romania. xxxii 481ff.

Von der Hagen III, xxxii.

Boccaccio, *De Cameron* II, No 9.

Shakespeare 'cymbeline.'

*Irish Myth*

MacCulloch 'Celtic Mythology' 110.

A Wesselski *Marchen des Mittelalters*, p. 213 No. 19.

T. O. Cross--*Motif Index of Early Irish Literature*.

D. S. Fansler--*Filipino Popular Tales*.

Stith Thompson and W. E. Roberts--*Types of India Oral Tales*.

Stith Thompson and Bayls--*The Oral Tales of India*.

4. Peter Buchan--*Ancient Ballads and Songs of the North of Scotland* (1875) Vol. II. "Twa Knights," p. 257.

5. Buchan is not inclined to think that these two knights were blood brothers. But they were sworn brothers, which possibly points out to the knighthood system of St. John and St. Malta. "They made a vow to be as true as if they'd been brothers born." This also proves clearly that they were not blood brothers.

Buchan--*Ancient Ballads and Songs*, Vol. II, p. 257.

squire undertakes to win the knight's wife within six months, if the husband will go overseas for that time; the knight is willing to give him nine months. The knight's lands are wagered against the squire's life.<sup>6</sup> As soon as the knight is at sea, the squire comes to the lady with an offer of money. If you were not my lord's brother, says the lady, I would hang you on a pin before my door. The squire betakes himself to his foster mother, sets forth his case, and offers her a heavy bribe for her aid. The false carline goes to the lady and opens her business; the lady will never wrong her lord. The carline now pretends concern about the lady's health, which is in danger for want of sleep. She turns all the people out of the castle, lulls the dame to sleep, and introduces the squire. He wakes the lady, and tells her that she is in his power. The lady has presence of mind; it would, she says, be a sin to defile her husband's bed, but she will come to the squire's bed at night. She then offers her niece five hundred pounds to go to the squire in her place.<sup>7</sup> The young woman was never so much disposed to say nay, but goes, notwithstanding. When the squire has had his will, he cuts off 'her ring and her ring finger.' The maids come from the hay, the young man from the corn, and the lady tells them all that has passed. She will tie her finger in the dark and hopes to lose it in the light

The knight returns. The ring and ring-finger are exhibited in proof. Thereupon the knight gives a dinner, to which he asks squire and his wife's parents. He throws his charter across the table and bids his wife farewell forever. It is now time for the lady to loose in the light the finger which she had tied in the dark. Come here my lord, she says. No smith can join a finger. My niece 'beguiled the squire for me.' They lay before the niece a sword and ring, and she is to have her choice, to strike the squire with a sword or to wed him with the ring. Thrice she puts out her hand as if to take the sword but she ends with taking up the ring.<sup>8</sup>

6. Thela G. James writes that when Child published his first edition of the "*English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, in 1858, Buchan's book was available. But Child took 'Twa Knight' ballad and incorporated in his book only in 3rd edition of his book.

"The English and Scottish Popular Ballads of Francis J. Child" *Journal of American Folklore*, Vol. 46, 1933, pp. 67.

7. In some other places, a maidservant is substituted for the mistress. In the ballad "Girl Breton" (Child No. 5) sister is kept as the substitute. (Vol. I, 63-70; Vol. III, 497).

8. According to G. Greig and A. Keith, *The Twa Knights ballad is very close to 'Fair Mettelille' Last Leaves of the Traditional Ballads and Ballads Airs*, (1925) p. xxiii.

There is only one ballad available in English, which according to Prof. Child, may be an offshoot from the widely spread story of the 'Twa Knights.' That ballad is 'Redesdale and Wise William.' The story of this ballad is as follows: Two gentlemen having spent some time together birling at the wine, the subject of the conversation turned on the incontinency of woman, when Wise William said that he had a sister<sup>10</sup> who lived in a bower not far distant, that no one could tempt to become unchaste. Redesdale laid in wad his head against the land of Wise William. Redesdale tried but even after threatening he could not seduce the sister of Wise William. He lost his wager.

In this ballad the chastity of sister is wagered in place of wife. Brother and sister are an older combination for these instances of close confidence and affection than husband or wife, lover and sweetheart. This shows the old character of this ballad.

"Redesdale and Wise William" and the "Twa Knights" are independent Scottish versions of 'Marianson's Rings' which has its centre probably in Italy. Curiously enough the march of the story in the Twa Knight's resembles more intimately the Greek 'Marianson's' than any of the intervening versions.<sup>12</sup>

The theme the Twa Knights is found in many of the European ballads. In the Czech form this ballad is entitled 'The Turk's Bride.' Boccaccio's use of the Imogen theme is probably older than any of the ballads of the cycle of Marianson's which may be either French or Italian. The ingenuity behind the story is rather Italian than French. In France it is called 'Marianson' or 'Innocence Proved' in north Italy 'The Rings'. It does not appear in the Spanish peninsula. The Romanian form is called 'Iancea Sa biencea.' An unwelcome note of ferocity is present in the Serbian 'Marko Kraljevic' and the Royal Delibasha, 'since it is not rings that are stolen as a proof of inconstancy

9 Child, No 246 Vol IV, p 383

Buchan, Vol. II, p 67.

Buchan has spelt as "Redesdale" differently from Child.

10 Motif, No N 261 (Sister as Wager) such stories are found in India.

C Sorabji *Indian Tales of the Great Ones*, 291

F. Hahn, *Blutke in Die Geisteswelt der heidnischen* Vols. 29 No. 16.

11. At the King's tale Maurianos extols his sister, whom gifts cannot seduce. The king bets to seduce his sister. He sends rich presents and expresses his desire to spend a night with her. Maurianos's sister dresses her slave Maria and asks her to sleep with the king. At mid-night the king cuts off the finger that had the rings (or in other versions--hair). He takes his trophies to the assembly and boasts to seduce Maurianos's sister. But his sister comes in the court and reveals the reality. The king has to become her slave (in other version--the king has to marry Maria, the maid servant).

12. W. J. Entwistle--*European Balladry*, p. 238.

but a hand cut off. In Russia Aljosa-Popovic is credited with an adventure of this sort, and the opening tableau—where a young husband unwisely boasts of his wife is found also in the ballad of 'Stavrn.'<sup>13</sup>

There is a Danish ballad very popular in the 16th and 17th Century has the wager theme of story. In this ballad, too, two knights wagered the chastity of a woman.<sup>14</sup>

There are numerous tales, closely connected with the ballad story of "Twa Knight," in which a man wagers heavily upon a woman's constancy. Such stories are characterized by the circumstances that the woman whose virtue is questioned puts another woman in her place in the encounter with the assailant, and that the proofs of success offered on a finger, finger ring, and head or braid of hair.

A rhymed tale of the thirteenth century, 'Von Zwein Kaufmannen' by Ruprecht Von Wurzburg has the following story, evidently French by origin. Bentram a merchant of Verdun is required in the course of business to go to a fair at Provins. At a place he speaks to his friends about his wife's modesty, manners. Hogier, the keeper of the inn, offers to stake all his goods against Bentram's, that he will seduce this peerless wife within six months.<sup>15</sup> Hogier goes to Verdun and takes a lodging opposite to his house. He begins with presents and messages to Irmengard. He tries to brief her servants and maid-servant. He offers large sum of money to lady's father and her father-in-law and they assure the lady to incur her husbands resentment. She finds a way out of her difficulties and asks the maid Armelin to spend a night with Hogier, Armelin garbed in Irmengard dress receives Hogier. Hogier asks for some jewels as a keepsake, and maid having nothing to give him, he cuts off one of her fingers. At the banquet Hogier states his case and produces the finger in confirmation of his claim. Meanwhile Irmengard shows her hands, both unmarred. Hogier has to accept Armelin as the wife.

13. W. J. Entwistle- *European Balladry*, p. 82. Discussion the popularity of the "Twa Knights" ballad theme, Prof. Mac Edward Leach thinks that the "Twa Knights is found among the Scandinavian countries as well as in England and Scotland. *The Ballad Book* (New York, 1955), p. 17.

14. Lange and Peder sit at the board talking of wives and fair maids. Peder assents that he could seduce any maid in this world but Lange knows a virtuous maid who could not be seduced. A wager of life (gold, good house, (land) is laid. Peder rides straight way to Ingelil, Thorlof's daughter, and makes love to her. But he failed and lost his life. Child. Vol. V. p. 25.

15. Precisely the same duration of time is also demanded by squire in the "Twa Knights."

Here we have a wager, substitution, finger cut off, as in the Scottish ballad and most of the Romanic versions.

The Mabinogi of Taliesin<sup>16</sup> in its present form not older than thirteenth century, has the incidents of the substitution of the maid-servant, the finger and finger ring with the modification that the wife's general high character and not simply continence is impugned and vindicated.

A lively play of Jakob Ayer's (about 1600) has the wager, the substitution, the ring offered in evidence the marriage with maid. The play's story goes. Claudius, master of the haunt to the prince of Calabria, on the eve of his departure on a voyage, is heard by two courtiers—Leipilt and Saubolt, Sotilo quizing on the excellence of his wife, Frigia. They wagered all their goods against his that they will bring the woman to do their will. Both attempt to buy the services of her maid-servant, who tells everything to their mistress and by their service she dresses two of her maids in her clothes and lets them meet the men, they meet the ladies get their desired things. When Claudius comes home, both inform the prince of the wager. But Frigia reveals the reality. The prince consequently, ordered them to marry with maid-servants<sup>17</sup>

There is a folktale from the Philippines<sup>18</sup> which is very close to some of the European folktales of wager type. A Cylonesc folktale refers to a man who wagers a germ to the person who would catch his wife's paramour.<sup>19</sup> There is folktale very popular, therein is described a courtesan who kept a gambling house and the persons who used to play Chaupar wagered their own bodies<sup>20</sup> Several stories are found in

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16. The King Maelgwn's nephew Elphin boasts that his wife is virtuous even than the Queen. The king feels insulted and arrests Elphin. He appoints his graceless son to defile chastity of Elphin's wife. Elphin's wife dresses up a kitchen maid in her dress and asks her to sit at the supper table with the graceless son of the king. He comes and is welcomed by the disguised maid servant. He fell to jesting with her put a powder into her drink, which cast her into a sound sleep and cut off her little finger, on which was Elphin's signet ring. But at last Elphin's wife is brought at a state-dinner where her unmutilated hand was shown. Compare—Lady Charlotte Guest's Mabinogion. Part VII pp. 364-83 or p. 477 of the edition of 1877; *An Abstract in E. Jones's Raric Museum*, p. 19

17. For detailed study of this wager type of (Chastity of a woman) tales, see footnote given by Child in Vol. V, p. 23.

18. D. S. Fanser—*Filipino Popular Tales*, "The Golden Lock" p. 248, No. 30.

19. H. Parker—*Village Folktales of Ceylon*, Vol. I. "The Nikini Story," p. 297. Natesh Sastri—*Indian Folktales*, p. 418. R. C. Temple—*Legend of the Punjab*, Vol. I, pp. 245-366.

20. H. Parker—*Village Folktales of Ceylon*, Vol. I. "The Kule Banka flowers," p. 175. Vol. II "The Story of a Prince and a King," p. 356. Vol. III, "The Royal Prince and the Hettirala. S. Devi—*The Oriental Pearls*, p. 60.

the Punjab in which Raza Rasalu and the King Sirkap have been depicted playing 'gamble' (Chaupar). The wagering of 'head' is mostly found in them.<sup>21</sup> In some of the folktales whole property is also found wagered.<sup>22</sup>

The *Mahabharata*<sup>23</sup> story of gambling of Kauravas and Pandavas goes like this. Once Duryodhan with an evil intention to ruin Pandavas, started gambling with them, with help of his maternal uncle Sakuni. Pandavas first wagered their kingdom then their Common Wife Draupadi and finally their own bodies. When they lost Draupadi in gamble, to the Kauravas, one of the brothers of the Duryodhan, Duyshashana, got up from the court, where gamble was in progress, and rushed towards the palace of Draupadi to bring her in the court as a chetel and insult her before the warrior Pandavas. When he arrived at the palace, she was engaged in hair-do, and more so, she was not well dressed. But the wicked Duyshashana caught her by the palit and started dragging her on the earth. When he reached in the court with her; he caught hold of one of the corners of her *sari* and began to strip her off with an intention of undressing her before the court. But when Draupadi felt that very soon she would be undressed; she prayed to Lord Krishna. The Lord Krishna heard her cries and lengthened her *sari* by thousand times. The *sari* became so long that Duyshashana could not strip off Draupadi and fainted. As Pandavas had lost themselves already, they had to be exiled for twelve years according to the gambling terms. They had to spend for one year of *agryata* (unknown dwelling) in the royal palace of Virat, a king as his servants. After completing the exilement successfully they regained their kingdom.

### Comments :

I have a feeling that this story of the *Mahabharata* might have been the source of wager type of tales and of the "Twa Knights"

21. C. Swynnerton, *Raza Rasalu*, "Rasalu and the King Sirkap," p. 95. F. A. Steel—*Tales of the Punjab*, "How Raza Rasalu Played Chaupar with King Sirkap," p. 262. J. Hertel—*Indische Marchen*, p. 172.

22. Tales relating to wagering of whole property of kingdom. A. D. Dracott—*Simla Village Tales*, "The Four Gifted Princess," p. 93. R. C. Temple—*The Legends of the Punjab*, Vol. I, 48, II, 207, 243. F. A. Steel—*Tales of the Punjab*, "How Raza Rasalu Played Chaupar with King Sirkap," p. 262. H. Parker—*Village Folktales of Ceylon*, Vol. III, "How the beggar and the king gambled," p. 249.

23. *The Mahabharata*: It is a Heroic Epic of India. The authorship of this famous book is attributed to Vyas Muni, who, it is said composed this voluminous book before 1500 B.C.

ballads. There are marked similarities between the framework story of the Mahabharata and the Twa Knights.

In the story of the *Mahabharata* and the Twa Knights both parties—who are gambling or wagering—are closely related to one another but definitely they are not blood brothers. The Pandavas and Kauravas of the *Mahabharata* are cousin brothers. The knight and the squire are sworn brothers.<sup>24</sup>

During the gamble to Pandavas have wagered their kingdom, their common wife and their bodies. But in the ballad story, chastity of a woman has been wagered which seems to be an European alteration in the *Mahabharata* story.

The squire, of the Twa Knights ballad with the help of his foster mother, overpowers the woman. Whereas in the Mahabharata story Duyshashana has got right to force Draupadi to come in the court because Pandavas has lost her in gamble. When the squire forces the lady to seduce her, she saves her chastity by substituting her niece in her place on the squire's bed. The wife of Pandavas, Draupadi, at the moment when she feels that she would soon be undressed before the court; pray's to Lord Krishna to save her from the shame.

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24. “They made a vow to be as true as if they'd been brothers born.” Child, Vol. V, p. 25. This clearly indicates that they are not blood brothers though closely related.



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A. V. SUBBA RAO

## ROLE OF FESTIVALS AMONG GADABAS IN ANDHRA PRADESH

The Gadabas are scattered over different hilly regions of Visakhapatnam and Srikakulam Districts of Andhra Pradesh. Two villages, one from each district, are taken for studying the role and the regional variations of festivals among Gadabas. The two villages are Reddivanivalasa from Srikakulam and Pedagadabapalem from Visakhapatnam District.

The festivals play a dominant role in Gadaba life. In spite of the crippled economic conditions, they are persistently following them and every festival has got its own underlying cause for doing so.

The annual cycle of the festivals in both the villages is given below :

TABLE I  
Cycle of festivals

Village	Name of the festival	Month	Duration
Pedagadabapalem (Visakhapatnam)	(1) Sankranti	January	3 days
	(2) Adavirajulapanduga	February	1 day
	(3) Ammatallipanduga	March	3 days
	(4) Nukalanmapanduga	March	1 day
	(5) Pasarupanduga	June	1 day
	(6) Gonalanmapanduga	July	1 day
	(7) Divali	October	1 day
	(8) Pantamnupanduga	November	1 day
	(9) Maridammupanduga	December	1 day
Reddivanivalasa (Srikakulam)	(1) Sankranti	January	3 days
	(2) Ammatallipanduga	March	8 days
	(3) Iutukulapanduga	June	6 days
	(4) Mokkaupanduga	July	1 day
	(5) Divali	October	1 day

Note :—'Panduga' is a Telugu word which means festival.

In both the villages, no festivals take place during the months of April, May, August and September and one festival or the other is celebrated during the months of January, March, June, July and October. In addition to that, February, November and December are the festival months in Pedagadabapalem but they are free months in Reddivanivalasa.

Any festival performed for one Goddess or the other is by expecting



some favour in return. The main purpose of performing different festivals at appropriate seasons, in the year is given in the following Table 2.

TABLE II  
Purpose of festivals

Village	Name of the festival	Purpose	Village level or individually performed	Animals sacrificed	Goddess worshipped
Pedagada-bapalem	Sankranti	For the welfare of the family	Individually performed	Fowls (one goat on the village)	Ancestral spirits
	Advirajula-panduga	For the safety of the people when they go to forest	Village level	Goat and fowls	Talupu-lamma
	Ammatalli-Panduga	For the welfare of the village	Village level	Goat and fowls	Lava and Kusa
	Pasaru-panduga	To get good rains	Village level	Pig and fowls	God Varuna
	Nakulamma panduga	For good crop return	Individual level	Goat and fowls	Earth Goddess
	Gonamma panduga	For better crops	Individual level	Fowls	Earth Goddess
	Divali	For the welfare of the family	Individual level	—	Ancestral spirits
	Pantamanu Panduga	Thanksgiving festival for better crops	Individual level	Fowls	Earth Goddess
Reddivani-valasa	Maridamma	For the welfare of the animals	Village level	Goat and fowls	Maridamma
	Sankranti	For the welfare of the family	Individual level	Fowls and goat on the village level	to worship the ancestral spirits
	Ammatalli Panduga	For the welfare of the village	Village level	Pigs 3 male goats 2 Ram 1	Bangaramma
	Iitukala panduga	For the safety of the people when they go to the forest	Village level	Pigs and fowls	Konda jankiri Devata-1 day Sanku-demudu-5 days
	Mokka panduga	For prospective crops	Village level	Pig 1	Earth Goddess
	Divali	For the welfare of the family	Individual level		Ancestral worship

The fowls mentioned in the above Table under each festivals are sacrificed on behalf of each family and they are specially offered in addition to the general offer of a goat or a pig by the villagers as a whole.

In both the villages Divali and Sankranti are taken in the same sense to offer worship to the ancestral spirits for the welfare of their families. Sankranti comes during the harvest season and it is so they offer new clothes to their ancestral spirits. That is quite costly and common time for them to have new clothes every year because they get money as it is the time of harvest. The aim of both Adavirajula panduga and Itukula panduga is the same but Itukula panduga is not followed by all Gadabas even though it is strictly observed in some areas like Salur in Srikakulam district. They perform Adavairajula panduga or Itukula panduga for they believe the forest Gods will guard them from all possible dangers during their forest visits. Hunting is the main aim during the Itukula festival and its duration would be 6 days in the month of June every year whereas Adavirajula panduga is a matter of one day in the month of February. During the Itukula panduga, the Gadabas of Srikakulam sacrifice one pig in addition to the animals hunted during the festival period and the fowls offered on behalf of each family, but their counterpart sacrifice one male goat and fowls during Adavirajula panduga. A tamarind tree personifies the Goddess during Adavirajula panduga and a stone is taken as God during the Itukula panduga. But in some villages like Nimmagadabapalem (Visakhapatnam) they are performing both the festivals for the same end

The village Goddess is generally referred as Ammatallu and that is one of the major festivals among Gadabas. The name of the village Goddess varies from area to area and that is proved by the information collected from the two villages taken for study. The village Goddess in Reddivanivalasa is Bangaramma whereas the village Goddess in Peda Gadabapalem is Talupulamma. Even though it is considered to be the important of all the festivals in both the areas, the duration of the festival varies from 8 days in Reddivanivalasa to 3 days in Peda Gadabapalem. The economics involved in it also varies accordingly. That is evident if the number of items of sacrifice and the other things are taken into consideration. The Gadabapalem worship only Talupulamma and sacrifice one male goat in addition to their individual offer of fowls but the Gadabas of Srikakulam worship Paiditalu, Bangaramma and Nukalamma at the same time and they offer three pigs, 2 male goats and one ram to the above 3 Goddesses even though the festival is mainly intended for Bangaramma. In both the cases, village Goddess is represented by decorated new earthen pots. They

consider their village Goddess as malevolent and so they are particular about celebrating this festival to avoid all possible evil effects of epidemics supposed to result in the village by its neglect.

The other festivals performing with a common aim in both the villages are Gonalamma mokka panduga. The former is performed on the village level but the later is on individual level. Both the festivals are meant for the earth Goddess in anticipation of better crops. In addition to the festivals described above, the others followed by the Gadabas of Pedagadapalem are Pasaru panduga, Pantamanu-panduga, Maridamma and Nukalamma panduga.

To have good rainy season, the Gadabas of Pedagadabapalem worship God Varuna during Pasaru panduga but there is nothing of that sort in Reddivanivalasa. Even for this, a selected tamarind tree is generally taken as God Varuna. A pig is sacrificed on the village as a whole. In addition to Gonalamma panduga the Gadabas of Pedagadabapalem perform another festival on the name of Nukalamma during March, another dry crop season, for having a better crops. If the above festivals are intended for the better crop return, there is another thanks giving festival (*Pantamanu panduga*) to Earth Goddess for giving a better crops. This is performed individually at their respective patches of land at the time of harvest and it is seen off with a fowl sacrifice. From the above analysis it is known at every stage of the crop, they offer something or the other for the Earth Goddess.

Maridamma panduga is organised by the people of Pedagadabapalem for the welfare of the animals in the village. A goat is sacrificed on the village level in addition to fowl offer individually. A tree personifies Maridamma.

If the financial aspect is taken into consideration Sankranti and Ammatalli festivals are costly for the following reasons. Sankranti is so because they have to invest on new cloths and the second one is performed on a large scale establishment. The duration of the festival also speaks out the amount of expenditure involved. Moreover, during the closing period of Ammatalli festival, they invite all their nearby relatives to participate in it. This is one of the inevitable occasions that every one generally takes advantage of that opportunity to visit each other. In addition to the animal sacrifice, they arrange a band (music troop) and organise at least one drama during this festival. Itukula panduga is also an expensive affair in case it is performed.

In Koyyur tribal Block area, (Visakhapatnam) separate huts are built on the name of Rama temple in some of the villages and there are people who learnt Hindu Bhajans with the help of plains experts. But there are no idols in the (Rama) temples except an earthen lamp,

lit now and then, representing the God.

During the festivals, they worship trees or pots or stones, taking them as Gods and in that respect they are observing their age old customs. Before they go through any festival, the preliminary preparations are plastering the huts with cow-dung and taking oil bath by all. Every animal to be sacrificed is usually washed and decorated with turmeric and vermilion dots and a bunch of margosa twigs are tied to its neck. Earthen lamp, fruits, flowers and the burning incense are the other common things used for any worship. Pujari generally attends all festivals performed on a village level but the sacrificing of animals can be done by any man. A big knife is used to cut the animal and they generally cut it with one stroke. During any festival, the common sacrifice on behalf of the village is offered first and then the other individual offers take place.

Co-operation of all the villagers is necessary at festival times and it is quite encouraging even though there are minor quarrels among them. The village president and the Naidu work together in all such matters.

In spite of the slight variability either in the ritual or in the duration of the festivals, the above facts show that the different religious ceremonies and festivals are an attempt to overcome the anxieties of an individual in course of his struggle with nature. By performing these ceremonies and participating in the festivals, he is overcoming the anxiety and gaining confidence in his effort. Incidentally, these are also providing him an escape from the boredom of his daily routine and gives scope for happy get-together.

*Andhra University, Waltier.*

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SHER SINGH

## MAHUN NAG FAIR

Bakhari is a small hamlet in Mahu Panchayat Circle about 9 miles from Churag on Simla-Karsong road where temple of Mahun Nag is situated at a height of about six thousand feet above sea level. A fair on this deity is held on a rectangular piece of land with tall fine trees around, about one mile away down the temple, known as Bagra Dar, on 2nd and 3rd Jyaistha (Bikrami—June-July) every year.

Different legends are ascribed about the origin of Mahun Nag. According to one legend it is an incarnation of Raja Karan of Mahabharata fame. One day a person was ploughing his field in village Shaindal when his plough struck with an image and it came out. The spirit of the god appeared in the person and spoke "I was Raja Karan and now I have assumed the form of Nag (serpent) I should be installed in a proper place." So the idol was taken to village Bhamnala about one mile from Bakhari where Brahmanas lived. But the god refused to stay there and went to Dharmola about half a mile from Bakhari where it laid a stone and from there went to Bakhari which was a thick forest in those days. On reaching there lightening sparked and a tree caught fire. The god stayed and temple was constructed there. The fire caused by the lightening was kept alive and is still continuing round the clock. But nobody could tell who and when this temple was constructed.

An other legend is that Raja Shyam Sen of Suket was imprisoned by Mughal King at Delhi and was encased in beating drum where Nag in the form of Mahun—honey bee—appeared and asked Raja to give him a place to stay. The Raja promised to give him half of his State provided he was set at liberty by the king. The Mahun assumed the form of man and played chess with the king and won the drum containing Raja. The Raja was set free and on reaching Suket he fulfilled his promise by offering half of his State putting boundary pillar at Nehri. But the Mahun Nag refused to take half of Suket State instead demanded only a small portion of land in a secluded area and selected Bakhari where temple was constructed. This legend, to some extent, is corroborated in the "History of the Panjab Hill States," Volume I by J. Hutchison and J. Ph. Vogel, page 355" to the fact that Raja Shyam Sen was imprisoned by Mughal King at Delhi and while in captivity he

prayed to Mahun Nag, who appeared to him in the form of a bee, and promised an early release." Again it is stated that "On his return from Delhi, Shyam Sen, in gratitude for his deliverance, granted a Jaggir of Rs. 400 a year to the temple of Mahun Nag, so called from Mahun (bee), owing to the Nag having appeared to the Raja in that form." It appears that the temple of Nag was in existence in the time of Raja Shyam Sen, that is in 1620 A.D., though it was named as 'Mahun Nag' in his time having appeared to him in the form of 'Mahun'—bee. But it cannot be established that the temple of Mahun Nag at Bakhari was constructed by Raja Shyam Sen. However, it can be deduced that the temple of Mahun Nag is more than three hundred years old.

Mahun Nag is the most popular god of Tehsil Karsong and is also revered by a great number of persons in other parts of Mandi, Mahasu, Sirmur and Simla districts. The temple is made of stone and wood. In one small apartment anthropomorphic images, made of silver and brass, representing the deity are fixed on the wall and these are worshipped daily in the morning. The main rooms where valuable articles are stored remain locked and around the temple is 'Kothi' of the Nag, water tank where rain water is stored and on oneside is 'Dhuni' where fire is kept alive round the clock. There are twelve other small temples of this Nag in different parts of Tehsil Karsong and Seoni. They are at Kaknu ilaqa Mahrana, Kot ilaqa Riunsi, Shalot ilaqa Pangna, Rohala ilaqa Tikkar, Pali ilaqa Biuns, Shergal ilaqa Biuns, Narol ilaqa Biuns, Baunch ilaqa Kajaun, Kot ilaqa Kajaun, Belu ilaqa Bagla, Talah and Khoba Tehsil Seoni. These are independent and not under the main temple. People have great faith in Mahun Nag especially to cure snake bite. If any person is bitten by snake he is brought to the temple, in case he is not in a distant place and kept there for three days otherwise after burning insence five paise are kept in the name of Mahun Nag and pray him to cure the victim of snake bite. No other treatment is given. It is said that not a single person would die of snake bite if Mahun Nag is invoked.

It is the richest god of tehsil Karsong with a bank balance of Rs. 16194/- as on 10th October, 1964. Some of its musical instruments like drums, Karnal, Narsinga are made of silver. Annual income mainly of offerings and expenditure for 1962 & 1963 are as under.---

TABLE I  
*Annual Income and Expenditure in 1962 & 1963*

<i>Year</i>	<i>Income</i>	<i>Expenditure</i>
1962	Rs. 9298/-	Rs. 3754/- (including Rs. 1000.- given as National Defence Fund)
1963	Rs. 7670/-	Rs. 2963/-

In 1964 the income as offerings of two fair at Bagra Dar and Sundarnager was Rs. 5139/- whereas expenditure on these fairs was Rs. 640/- only. The heads of expenditure will be clear from the budget proposal for 1964 as below :—

TABLE II

*Budget proposal in the Head of Expenditure in 1964*

<i>Head</i>	<i>Rupees</i>
Bhog	144
Pay of Watchman	540
Land Revenue	10
Pay of Secretary to the temple committee	150
Food for servants for 12 Sankrants	160
Fairs and festivals	350
Durga Ashtami fair Sundarnagar	460
Repairs building	2,000
Allowance for the members of Temple Committee	180
Stationery	10
Richiaol (Rice distributed as blessings)	20
Sada Brat	40
Lights	20
T A. for Secretary to visit Kaisog	50
Allowance for cashier	72
Allowance for 'gur'	96
Repair of utensils	100
Repair of furniture	40
Newspaper	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,482</b>

The affairs of the temple are managed by a Temple Committee consisting of four members, one Vice-president, one Secretary and Tehsildar Karsong is ex-officio President. The members are elected after every three years by the people of the area by show of hands. In addition there are some other hereditary attendants of the deity. They are Kathiala - Cashier, Pujari Gur, and Mohte. The main door of the temple cannot be opened in the absence of a Mohta from village Seri. All expenditures are incurred with the sanction of the President of the Temple Committee. The members are paid Rs. 36/- per head per annum as allowance and the secretary is paid Rs. 12.50 per month.

The fair is ancient one but no date could be ascribed to its origin. In the fair the deity is symbolised by a 'Rath' decked with three silver plates with four facial marks on each around three sides and yak tail hair on the fourth side. Above the plate opposite yak hair is a big image with disc about its head locally called 'arsi' and 'chhatar' in the

centre as well as on four corners of the 'Rath' with silken robes suspended around it and decorated with jewellery and flowers. This 'Rath' is suspended on two parallel wooden bars and carried by four persons on their shoulders. The procession starts at about 10.00 A.M. on 2nd Jyaistha from the temple to Bagra Dar headed by 'Chhatar', Phrere—flags, Chharis—wooden staves plated with silver, musicians, Gur and then 'Rath' of Mahun Nag followed by other attendants. On reaching there a goat is sacrificed to the deity and 'gur' inspired with the spirit of Mahun Nag trembles, shouts and swings locally it is called 'Khelna'. Then deity dance for sometime and then takes rest when Nati-folk dancers dance. Some games like Tug of War and Kabaddi are also organised. The deity stays at Bagra Dar at the site of fair for the night also. At night documentary films are shown by the information Centre of Block Office and people dance 'Nati'.

This fair is attended by seven to eight thousands persons and the peak gathering is on 3rd Jyaistha the day of 'big fair'. These persons come mostly from Tehsil Karsong, Chichot, Mandi Sadar, Seoni, Theog, Kumharsain, Rampur, district Kulu and Simla. Proportion of male and female visitors is estimated to three to two and female visitors are mostly from Tehsil Karsog. People offer coins to the deity and some sacrifice goats if promised in return of their prayers. The amount of offerings in this fair runs into thousand rupees. In 1962 was Rs 2055/-, in 1963 Rs. 2120/- and in 1964 Rs. 2404/-. It is a religious fair as people mainly gather there to pay respects to Mahun Nag and offerings as promised in return of their prayers granted by the deity. It provides opportunity to renew social contacts and meet their kith and kins.

There are about 100 shops in this fair and highest number is of sweet shops about 50, other food stuffs including hotels 20, maniani 10, dry fruits 10 and fruits 10. Fruits sold in the fair are bananas, mangoes, musk melon and oranges. Space for shops is levelled and allotted to the shopkeepers by the Panchayat and charge ten paise per square yard from them as tax though statutorily Panchayat is not authorised to impose such tax. It is collected in the shape of charity to augment the funds of the Panchayat. An expenditure of about Rs. 150/- is incurred on levelling, water supply and half of the cooliage charges for carrying projector and other equipment from Karsong to Bagra Dar by the Panchayat. Expenditure on food for three days for these members is borne by the Panchayat. Drinking water is also arranged by the Panchayat but no other facilities of shelter and sanitation are provided to the public.

*Office of the Census operations, U. P., Simla.*



## EDITORIAL

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Rightly it has been asked by many as to who own folklore? Or folk music, whose property? Some say it is the composers who are its real owners. Collectors claim that it is they who own folklore because they have saved that from oblivion. However, enthusiasts are passionately involved in folk song and dance for enjoyment. It is not their concern who owns it. But it is well known that the song and dance have, for many centuries, played a large part in the lives of people, although the adjective 'folk' used in this context is of recent origin. Much goes on even today in the way of home-made entertainment which is not recognised by the folk enthusiast as coming from the same stock as thing in which he himself is so deeply involved. It is well known that increased leisure mean increased loneliness. We can stop this loneliness by popularising folksong and dance which is a major part in social recreation for all kinds of people. Through familiar song and dance, we can help to recreate a sense of community. Due to modernism there has been a breakdown in family and social relationships and because of the constant movement of people we have not only learnt but also have forgotten many things of the past. We can give service here, and at the same time, enrich our own knowledge, by encouraging people to dig into their own memories and traditions.

It should not be forgotten that India is a cosmopolitan country, whose wealth of folk traditions partly derives from this cosmopolitan nature of the land. India has absorbed many tribes and immigrants and their traditions, customs, superstitions etc. in the past. India can do so now, and help to encourage good race relations by encouraging respect for cultural traditions of tribes and immigrants, not only between the races, but also by encouraging pride in everybody's own traditions. Thus we should encourage people to participate in their own kind of folk activities in their own social way. This is what Indian Folklore Society must do now through opening up different branches in various centres of the country. If this could be done faithfully the Indian Folklore Society, could then become a respected organisation rather than one regarded with a body of a few researchers. It should be opened to the masses—they should be provided with the scope for the cultivation of their own tradition, their own song and dance. This may be treated as an experiment. And we know that in an attempt to find the folk interest of different parts of the community such local organisations are of immense value. To emphasise in all of this and to find out what people respond to most readily is needed to be ascertained. This is only a beginning to expand the movement.

## PRINCIPAL OBJECTS OF THE "INDIAN FOLK-LORE SOCIETY"

(a) to collect, record, study and research of the folklore of India which is the solid foundation of our socio-economic civilization;

(b) to promote and strengthen the cultural and friendly ties between India and abroad;

(c) to organise folk-arts, folk crafts & photography, folk costume, folk instruments and the type exhibition in Calcutta or any other place within or outside India under the direct supervision of the Society;

(d) to publicise and otherwise make known the folk-literature, folk-arts & crafts, folk-music & dance and other cultural expressions of India and other countries, and to organise, hold and assist in the organisation of folk-culture gathering, folk-art etc. exhibitions, folk-music and folk-drama performances;

(e) to organise folk-art museum, folk-literature library and other activities for propagation and advancement of the folk-lire movement;

(f) to arrange and organise tours, visit to places of interest for research work;

(g) to publish periodicals, treatises, books and other publications for the furtherance of all or any of the objects of the Society;

(h) to conduct and stimulate research in folk-lore with a view to explore the same in the light of the modern achievements and experience, and to maintain finance, help persons and bodies engaged in such research activities;

and (i) to accept and receive subscriptions and gifts of all kinds, whether absolute or conditional, for the purposes of the Society.

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# FOLKLORE

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## MARRIAGE AND KINSHIP AS DEPICTED IN ANDHRA FOLKLORE

### Introduction

Folk songs constitute the essential part of the oral literature of a society. They are the songs which a lay man can easily understand and appreciate. They contain simple language and convey age old ideas. These songs are not the exclusive property of any individual but they are considered as national heritage for which anybody of the society can feel proud of. Their authorship cannot be traced to any particular individual. In the words of T. F. Henderson, "The proper destiny of its author is in glorious obscurity and its appropriate place is enshrinement in the heart and memory of the people." In any part of India these songs are sung at times of festivals, marriages and harvesting. Also people sing songs joking with each other in leisure times. Folk songs have a peculiar relationship with the social institutions.

### Folk Songs of Andhra Pradesh

The first authentic attempt at collecting the folksongs in "Telugu", the language of the Andhras was by J. A. Boyle in 1874. He published a paper on, "The Telugu Ballad Poetry" in the "Indian Antiquary." In that he gave a detailed account of "Sarvayi Papani Katha", a folk song describing the heroism and loyalty of an Andhra hero "Sarvayi Papadu" towards his king. Christofor Von Feurer Haimendorf, the noted anthropologist in "The Reddis of the Bison Hills" gave an account of the folk songs of the "Koya" tribe. In his work on "The

Chenchus" also, he gave a detailed account of the "Chenchu" folk songs. Andhra folk songs as is the case with those in any part of India, depict various usages connected with the social institutions. In every household, especially in the rural areas there are one or two members who can sing these songs. Marriage and Kinship are the two important social institutions that provide a theme in these folk songs.

## MARRIAGE SONGS

### (a) *Selection of the Bridegroom*

In every family marriage of a daughter demands careful attention of the family and it is felt as a great burden. In the peasant society of Andhra Pradesh the girl's parents, while selecting a suitable match to their daughter, see that the boy is handsome, that he is having sufficient lands and gardens which yield good harvest, that he is owning beautiful house, and above all that he is a good match to their daughter as far as his age and character are concerned. The following folk song depicts the above theme in a beautiful manner—

Alla voori varu Pilla nadigeru,  
Pillavaniki roopu rekhallunnai  
Yeteta Pandeti broomulunnai (Alla)

Voori Polimeralo Totalunnai  
Chuttu Kallakimpu Middelunnai (Alla)

Kurravaniki Manchi Sedyamunnadi  
Pilladaniki Tagina eedu Jodenu  
Kannenistamani kaburampudam (Alla)

Allavoori varu Pilla nadigeru  
Illaliki muggetti Pellisettamu (Alla)

(People of the neighbouring village have asked our daughter for their boy. That boy is handsome, owning lands, giving rich harvest every year and gardens in the outskirts of his village. He has big house and above all he is a suitable match to our daughter in so far as his age and character are concerned. So let us decorate our house and perform the marriage).

### **Marriage Ceremony**

Again in the marriage ceremony both the parties (those of the bride and the bridegroom) cut jokes with each other. There are so

many songs mocking each and every important member of the bridegroom's party. These songs create an atmosphere of relaxation and joviality.

The bride's mother sings the following song mocking her counterpart (bridegroom's mother).

"Vivaramerugami viyyapuralkki vididelu choopitimi  
Hechhuga vididelu choopitimi.

Vivaramerugani viyyapurulu vididelonundaduga  
Hechhuga vididelonudaduga

Paludomupudaka Pannirubaddi vidideku Pampitimi  
Hechhuga vidideku pampitimi  
Paparapalla viyyapurulu Palletomaduga  
Hechhuga Mohame kadagaduga

Agarunune Dantapu Duvvena vidideku Pampitimi  
Hahhuga vidideku Pampitimi,

Tattatala viyyapurulu Tale Duvvaduga  
Hechhuga sige chuttaduga.

Attaru sisa sabbubilla vidideku Pampitimi  
Hechhuga vidideku Pampitimi

Abbabba yeevasana Maku Alavatledaniri  
Hechhuga Alavatledaniri

(We offered a big guest-house for the bridegroom's party to stay, as they are strangers to our village. But alas! the bridegroom's mother (viyyapurulu) who knows not formalities won't even stay in that guest-house (Vidie). We also sent things necessary for cleaning teeth (Paludomu pudaka—used as a substitute for tooth brush) and rose water to the bridegroom's party but my counterpart (bridegroom's mother) who is having spade like teeth won't brush her teeth. We also offered an ivory comb and scented oil to them but my counterpart who is having hair resembling a basket on her head, won't even comb her hair. We sent perfume and soaps for their use but they told us that they are not accustomed to their use. We also sent "Katuka" and "Kumkum" but my counterpart won't even apply "Kumkum" to her forehead, leave alone "Katuka" (a decorative black powder for the eyes—in Hindi, "Surama"). We also sent coffee, Vupma and Idli (light refreshments) to the guest-house but they told us that they are not habituated to the "hot" refreshments. Lastly we



offered Banaresi silk saree and Mukhamal "blouse" to my counterpart but she prefers her torn old saree to our sarees and said that she is not habituated to the use of a "blouse" (upper garment).

The above song is usually sung by the bride's marriage party including her mother in chorus ridiculing the bridegroom's mother in particular and their party in general.

### **Bidding Farewell to the Bride**

But all this light atmosphere disappears at the time of bidding farewell to the bride. The ceremony of handing over the bride to her parents-in-law is called "Ampakamu" or Appagintalu ceremony in Telugu. One can witness moving scenes on this occasion such as those depicted by Kalidasa, the great Sanskrit poet and dramatist, in the Act IV of his drama "Shakuntala." The parents though happy for having secured a goodmate for their daughter feel heavy at heart for parting with their daughter.

There are folk songs depicting the above scene in a beautiful manner. Bidding farewell to the daughter mother advises the daughter to follow in her in-law's house the following—

"Selavichhi Mayamma Selavichhinamma  
Chelagi Mee Attintlo Buddhiga nundavamma  
Yevvaremadina yeduradakamma"

(Oh! daughter! we are bidding you farewell! Go and behave yourself in your husband's house (Attintlo) gently. Do not get angry even if you are provoked).

At the same time she appeals to her counterpart ("Viyyapuralu"—bridegrooms mother) in the following manner—

"Ma Bala Mee Bala Summee  
Ma Bala Mee Balaga Choodavalenu."

(The bride is not our daughter but yours. Treat your daughter as you treat your own daughter).

She also says—

"Buddhu lerugadu Manku Buddhelegani  
Buddhi vachhinadaka Diddukovamma  
Ada boyina chota Attu vundenu  
Mellaga Nerpuga Biluchukovamma  
Kodalu Mee Sommu Koduku Mee Sommu  
Adavarini kanna Alusantenamma  
Sirivanti Kodalu, Muruvanti Koduku  
Maguvaranec Bhagya Mahima yemamma!

(My daughter is young and in this young age she does not know domestic work. Kindly teach her until she learns things herself in your house. She will stay wherever she goes for play for hours together, summon her with sweet words. You are fortunate in having a daughter-in-law and a son who are like the pair of Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Vishnu).

The above folk song also brings into light one custom regarding child marriage. Previously girls were married before puberty as a result of which they were still children who knew nothing except playing with their friends of the same age at the time of going to their husband's house.

### Kinship Terminology

In rural Andhra Pradesh joint family is usually found. This joint family is always patrilineal and patrilocal. The males are born and live all their lives in the house of their paternal kin, while their wives are brought in from other families and the girls born in the family are given away as brides into other families. So the incoming bride in such cases naturally be a stranger in her parents-in-law's household. Her only companion with whom she can speak freely and on whom all her sweet thoughts and attention are concentrated is her beloved husband. For a few days and even for months all her dream world rotates around her husband. This condition of a newly wedded to bride is depicted in the following folk song. This song is sung in the way of conversation between the daughter-in-law and her mother-in-law.

"Duvvena vachhi Dontilo Vunnadi Rave Kodala  
 Duvvena vaste Nakemi ? Adi Dontilo vunte Nakemi ?  
 Eerpena Vachhi Yiruvulonunnadi Rave Kodala  
 Eerpena Vaste Nakemi Adi yiruvulanunte Nakemi ?  
 Pooculu vachhi Buttalonunnavi Rave Kodala  
 Poovulu vaste Nakemi ? Buttalo vunte Nakemi ?  
 Koka vachhi Koyyapi vunnadi Rave Kodala  
 Koka vaste Nakemi Adi Koyyapi vunte Nakemi ?  
 Bottu vachhi Tattalo vunnadi Rave Kodala  
 Bottu vaste Nakemi ? Adi Tattalo vunte Nakemi ?

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Pendli koduku vachhi pitapai nunnadu Rave Kodala  
 Pendli koduku vante vasta—Pitapaiki Nenu vasta.

(In the above song the mother-in-law asks her daughter-in-law to come and take the comb, flowers, Kumkum and saree for decorating herself but the bride refuses to come even when the mother-in-law says that Brahmins are explaining the various predictions in the "Panchang" concerning the new year. Having failed in her attempt to make the bride to decorate herself, the mother-in-law succeeds at last by saying that the bridegroom is there waiting for the bride. Then the bride agrees to come and sits along with her husband).

The bride has to adjust herself to the different members in the joint family. Here sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law try to come closer to her by singing songs joking about her intimacy with her husband. But there are certain regulations regarding this joking relationship. A woman should avoid conversation with her husband's elder brother and a man with his younger brother's wife as well as his son's wife. Similarly the relation between father-in-law and daughter-in-law, mother-in-law and son-in-law are of this type. Between relatives like brothers and sisters there is informality.

The type of preferential mating has influenced the kinship terminology to a great extent in Andhra Pradesh. In a large number of castes the first preference is given by a man to his mother's brother's daughter in choosing a bride. There is also marriage with one's elder sister's daughter and father's sister's daughter. Besides all these marriages, there are quite a number of marriages outside the group of kin (i.e. cross-cousins and elder sister's daughter). Among younger people now a days there is a tendency to seek marriage outside the kin group even if suitable mate's are available in their own kin-group if their maternal uncles and paternal uncles are not in a position to offer big dowries and also if their daughters are not educated. But a majority of people in the rural areas still follow the preferential type of mating in the rural areas.

A series of terms reflect the obvious influence of the cross-cousin marriage. The term "Mama" is used for wife's father, father's sister's husband, and mother's brother. This denotes the equation of father-in-law with mother's brother and father's sister's husband. Similarly the term "Atta" means mother-in-law as well as father's sister and mother's brother's wife. Inversely the term "Alludu" means son-in-law, brother's son (female speaking) and sister's son (male-speaking), husband's sister's son and wife's brother's son. The influence of preferential cross-cousin marriage is also reflected in such terms as "Maradi" "Maradalu" and "Bava" which are used in respect of cross-cousins as also sons-in-law. For instance "Maradi" means one's 'younger' sister's husband, husband's younger brother, wife's younger

brother, father's sister's if younger than ego (female speaking) ; and mother's brother's son if younger than ego (female ego). Also the term "Bava" means husband's elder brother, wife's elder brother, elder sister's husband, father's sister's son (if elder than ego) and mother's brother's son (older). Thus in Andhra Pradesh kinship terminology has a predominant influence of the preferential marriages. Now joking relationship is permitted between a woman and her "Maradi" (husband's younger brother, and "Maradalu" (husband's younger sister). But she should show respect towards her husband's elder brother ; and husband's elder sister. Here there is difference in the attitude shown towards the husband's elder brother and elder sister's husband. Though both are addressed as "Bava" a woman should not joke with her husband's elder brother but she can joke with her elder sister's husband and also with her younger sister's husband, whom she calls as "Maradi". She can also joke with her mother's brother's son and father's sister's son whom she addresses as "Bava" or "Maradi" according to their age. In the same way a man may joke with his wife's sisters ; elder brother's wife and sister's husband's sister.

There is joking relationship between grand-father and grand-daughter, grand-mother and grand-son

Though the relationship between a woman and her husband's younger brother (Maradi) is one of joking, this is interpreted as due to the intimacy arising out of a feeling of mother and son relationship.

The following folk song testifies to the existence of such a feeling

"Bavimpanerchute Bava ye Tandri  
Mannimpanerchute Maradi ye Koduku  
Vaddimpanerchute Vadma ye Tulli."

(If one knows how to respect her "Bava" (husband's elder brother) she should regard him as her Tandri (father). If one knows how to treat her Maradi (husband's younger brother) he should be her (Koduku) son and she, his mother).

At the same time a woman can joke with her sister's husband whom she calls as "Bava". The joking relationship is depicted in the following song sung by young girls addressing their elder sister's husband.

Bava ! Bava ! Panniru  
Bayanu Pattuka Tanneru  
Moodu guddulu gudderu  
Moola manchamesuru.  
Muntedu ganji ichheru.  
.....  
.....  
.....

(Oh ! My dear Bava (elder sister's husband) you are like Panniru (Lavender) ; somebody have beaten you black and blue. They made you sit on a cot in a corner and gave you "ganji" (liquid extract filtered from cooked rice. This is generally used by the poor people as one of the food items).

So also a woman can joke with her Maradi (Both her husband's younger brother and younger sister's husband). The following folk song illustrates the way in which a woman jokes with the above relatives.

"Own Mangalam-Maradiki Tagune Mangalam !  
 Snanam chesedanta-Sandhyalu varchedanta  
 Sandhyavela Maradi-chakaldanta navvedanta.  
 Yinelu cheelchedanta-Vistallu kuttadanta  
 Veedhilo Mamaradi yidigadanito Matladadanta,  
 Guntalu Tannedanta-kuppalu yemo Pattedanta.  
 Kuppachatuna Ma Maradi garu Kunmaridanito Matladenanta.

(Oh ! my Maradi ! you deserves "Mangalam (originally meaning "Subha" or good is some times used in a lighter vein for beating) because though you pray to God in the evening times you are joking with the washer-woman at the same time. Also you make "leaf plates" (vistalu) and you speak with the Todday tapper's woman and you are making big heaps of earth for taking with the potter's woman behind those heaps.)

In the same way a woman's husband's younger sisters and brothers joke with her. For a few months after the marriage, a woman's "Maradalu" (younger sisters of her husband) and "Maradulu" (husband's younger brothers) mock at her accusing her of converting their good brother in her favour by administering some mysterious medicine.

"Mandu Pattinadi Vadina Sundari Ma Vadina  
 Manchi Ma Annayaku Matulu cheera pindi Vadina  
 Jeelakarra Bellamlonu, Jiledi Moggalonu  
 Hechhaina yela Ginjallonu yedo kalipindi Vadina  
 Laddu Jilebillonu, Kaja Halvallonu  
 Hechhina Kariakajjamlonu yedo kalipindi Ma Vadina  
 Manchi kobbarilonu, Pala Jilebilonu  
 Hechhina coffeelonu yedo kalipindi Ma Vadina  
 Panchadara Jilebilonu, Mysorepakamlonu  
 Hechhina Pindivandallonu yedo Kalipindi Vadina

(Oh ! Vadina ! you have given some mysterious drug to our good brother and he is not in his senses now. Perhaps you have mixed this

drug in the sweets like Laddu, Jilebi, Kaja, Halva etc., which you have brought from your parent's house or you might have been mixing it with coffee. Certainly you have mixed a mysterious drug with these sweets etc).

They also mock at her by saying that her present happy life is only due to their (bridegroom's family) kindness only. They sing the following song addressing their "Vadina" (elder brother's wife)

"Ma valla gada—Neekinta Yogam  
Yevvariki kalugu Vadina -Yinta Bhogamu  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
Talaku Anadamu poosinadi Poyene  
Kaliki Sampenganune Pooyanayene Vadina  
Gonelu kattukonna kalamantayu poyene  
Kamata karnata chiralanni kattanayene !

(Oh ! Vadina ! (My elder brother's wife) you are enjoying pleasures only due to our kindness. Formerly (i.e. before marriage) you used to apply castor oil to your hair but now you are using scented oil, also you used to wear thick gunny bag like sarrees but now you are wearing "Karnatak" sarrees (Bangalore is famous for silk sarrees). Your happiness is due to us only. Remember that my dear Vadina).

The joking relationship between a woman and her sisters-in-law and her younger brothers-in-law serve one social function, i.e., it aids the incoming bride to get closer to her husband's immediate relations especially his sisters and brothers

A marriage produces a temporary disequilibrium situation. The intrusion of a stranger into a group of kin is a disturbance. As such joking relationship between different members of a family especially the incoming bride and her brothers-in-law (younger) and sisters-in-law is necessary for establishing a new equilibrium.

The joking relationship also varies according to the generation. Between grandparents and grandchildren the joking relationship is at a higher degree. Grandchildren make fun of their grandparents thus :—

"Tata Pita Munjikaya Moota "  
.....  
.....

(Oh ! "Tata" (Grand-father) you are like a palm fruit) The relationship between these relatives (i.e., grandparents and grandchildren) is one of simple friendliness free from restraints. Joking

relationship is at a higher degree between the cross-cousins of the opposite sex who are potential mates. A girl mocks at her male cross-cousin thus :

"Navvala Na Raju Menatta Koduku  
Nannu Chooda vachhina Narakanabadunu."

.....  
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.....

(My father's sister's son is an ever smiling king. If he comes to see me, he will go to hell).

Likewise a young man mocks at his female cross-cousin (mother's brother's daughter).

"Menamama Kuturu Melammu gatti  
Melambu ladutu Medadiganidu."

.....  
.....

(My mother's brother's daughter won't allow me to descend from the upper apartment engaging me all the time with pleasant talk and laughter).

Another relationship which provides a theme for the Telugu folk songs is that between a woman and her mother-in-law. This relationship is pictured as one of hostility and enmity.

The following folk song depicts the above relationship. In this folk song a mother-in-law questions her daughter-in-law thus :—

"Kodala ! Kodala ! Koduku Pellama !  
Koduku Voollo ledu  
Malle lekkadivi ?

(Oh ! my daughter-in-law ! my son is not in the village. Where from you got these Jasmine flowers ? (apparently with the suspicion that her daughter-in-law got these flowers from her lover).

For this query the daughter-in-law replies

"Arati poosindi, Arati kachindi  
Atta Pettina Arallu Marapunaku Ravu  
Aralla Attaina Savati Porina  
Tallillu Dooramina Bharinchalemu."

.....  
.....

(I got these flowers from the plantain tree. One cannot bear the ill-treatment of a mother-in-law if one's parents are away at a distant place).

### Proverbs

Not only folk songs but the proverbs of Andhra Pradesh also depicts the hostile relationship between a woman and her mother-in-law. Some of them are given below :—

i. "Attaleni Kodaluttamuralu, Kodaluleni Atta Gunavanturalu."

(A daughter-in-law without a mother-in-law is a very good woman. Similarly a mother-in-law without a daughter-in-law is also a very good woman).

ii. Atta chachhina Arunelalaku Kodiliki Dukham vachhindata "

(Six months after the death of her mother-in-law a daughter-in-law wept).

iii Atta chejarinadi Adugoti kunda ; Kodalulu chejarinadi  
Kotta kunda

(The pot that has been dropped by a mother-in-law is a very old one and that dropped by a daughter-in-law is a very new one).

### The Breaker of the Joint Family

Also a house-wife is often depicted as the breaker of the joint-family. A woman being unable to bear the quarrelsome mother-in-law goads her husband to separate her from the joint family—

"Sandamama kanna sakkanni Moguda  
Vere podama vere podama  
Attamamala poru Ne padalenu  
Adubiddala poru Asale padalenu  
Ungarala cheyi oogera Moguda  
Kandiriga nadumu kadilera Moguda  
Kondanta koppu kadilera Moguda  
Koppupn Jajulu Vadera Moguda "

(Oh ! my beautiful husband ! let us separate from this joint family. I am not able to bear the ill-treatment of your mother and sisters. I am very much tired as a result of the hard work I am doing in this house).

In another folk song she complains to her husband thus :—

"Ye valla choochina yevuru polamuboru  
Bava Pettanadaru Bayata Tirigivachhu"

.....  
.....



(Nobody goes to the fields for work except you. Your elder brother who is the head of the family spends time in wandering in the village).

She also says,

"Kookundi Vankaya koorato Dinipistu  
Madu chekkala Dinna Manakemi Gatiyandu."

(I will make you to eat food with curries if we are separated. What necessity is there for us to take the charred stuff which we are eating now).

And finally she requests him to proceed to her parent's house as her parents are wealthy people.

"Kalavaru Mavaru Karavaina Manakemi  
Kalavaru Ma Inta Kapuramu Cheyavachhu.  
Polamu Mayannalu Poniyahani ninnu.

.....  
.....

(My parents are wealthy people. We need not worry. We can live in their house. Don't hesitate. My brothers won't even ask you to go to the field for work).

## Conclusion

Thus in the folk songs and proverbs of Andhra Pradesh the various kinship relations have been portrayed in a beautiful manner. These folk songs are useful to gain an insight into the life of the peasant society of Andhra Pradesh. As such they are valuable assets to the Social Anthropologists studying the nature of the relationships between different members of a joint family in rural Andhra Pradesh.

After all, the institutions of mankind, language, law, religion, etc., had a natural origin and natural development. The study of the songs of the simple peasant societies would provide a means for a better understanding of human nature and human society.

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## A NOTE ON A FEW BRITISH WEDDING CUSTOMS

For marriage celebration June is the most popular month in Britain. It has been for many countries and even to-day. It is interesting to note that March and early April are beginning to rival it. This is because if a man marries before the fifth of April, when the Income-tax year closes, he may claim a wife's allowance for the whole year.

The popularity of June for wedding is due to the abundance of flowers for decoration for the event. But it is also due to an old tradition, dating back in time to the days of ancient Rome. June was the month dedicated to the Goddess Juno, and Juno was regarded as the Protectress of women, especially of married women. June, therefore, was thought to be the most favourable time for marriage, as May, the month just before it, was considered to be the most unfavourable.

### **Why May is unlucky for marriage :**

The belief that May was an unlucky month in which to marry goes very far back in time. Some scholars think that the origin of the belief must be looked for in primitive fertility rites. The month of May was called after Maia, the Goddess of spring, and spring in all parts of the world is the growing season. It may well be that the tradition that marriage should not take place until May is over is a faint echo of the strict abstention practised by primitive man to ensure the well being of his newly sown seed.

It is certain that in ancient Rome matrimonial contracts were frowned upon until the month of May had passed and June had come, and the Romans brought the tradition with them to Britain, together with many of the marriage customs which are still in use to-day. One of the most important of these, apart from actual religious ceremony, is the placing by the bridegroom of a ring upon the finger of the bride.

Mythology attributes the making of the first ring to Prometheus, the friendly Titan who brought down upon himself the wrath of Zeus by stealing fire from Olympus for the benefit of man. Whoever the real inventor may have been, the man who first used a ring in a marriage ceremony must have been something of a poet in thought. The ring, being circular, has no end and has been regarded as the symbol of eternity; and the significance of using it in marriage is that true love, also, will continue for ever.

### **The Ring Finger :**

It is usual to put the ring on the fourth finger of the bride's left hand, and opinions vary as to why this finger should have been chosen from rest. A prosaic idea is that the left hand, being commonly less used than the right one, would be a safer depository for the ring. A more poetic reason for this is that it was made because of the old belief that an artery ran direct from the fourth finger to the heart, and the heart, it was supposed, was the fount of all affection.

### **Wedding Cakes :**

Usually in a token of binding agreement cakes were eaten. First the Romans used the custom in wedding ceremonies and later they brought it to Britain. Anglo-Saxon ancestors often broke the cake in pieces and threw the crumbs over the heads of the bride and bridegroom, in token of a wish that the couple might prosper and always have plenty to eat. These pieces were scrambled for by the unmarried of the guests to be laid under their pillows at night to bring dreams of future marriage partners. Young girls even today do the same with small portions of wedding cakes handed round to the guests or sent later to those who attended the ceremony.

### **Wedding Garments :**

Something old  
Something new  
Something borrowed  
And something blue.

The 'something old' today is often the wedding veil, as no doubt it was in the past. The veil being made of lace or some other expensive material, was frequently handed down from mother to daughter through many generations treasured as a costly heirloom. The system of borrowing wedding dresses was prevalent in those days.

Something blue was also essential on the last line of the verse. Some people think that as blue has been considered the colour of fidelity, a bride should wear it as a token for the love of her husband. The white dress which a bride usually wears is also a symbol of virginity. A widow, marrying again, should not wear white.

### **Flowers and Decorations :**

Bay leaves and sprigs of rosemary once figured largely in the bouquets and the church decorations, and in the favour worn by the

guests. These herbs were probably used as medical precaution, their powerful scent being considered a preventive of infection, which in those somewhat insanitary times, was a very potent danger when any large collection of people took place.

### **Gloves At Wedding :**

During the sixteenth and the seventeenth century, gloves were an indispensable item at a fashionable wedding ceremony. A clergy man will refuse to perform his duty if he were not presented with a pair of gloves in addition to his fees. Wedding gloves, being white, show the symbol of purity.

### **Some obsolete customs :**

Many of the customs connected with the wedding have died down. Such, for instance, as one which decreed that if a younger daughter should be married before her elder sisters, the older girls should dance barefoot at the reception held after the ceremony. Another, once very prevalent in Scotland, insisted that on the day after his marriage a bridegroom must run through the town or village in which he lived with a basket of heavy stones fastened on his back. A troop of jeering young men would accompany him to make sure that he did not drop the burden, until his wife should overtake him and kiss him.

Yet another very interesting custom now fallen into disuse might be revived with advantage - that is the custom of strewing rose petals, or flowers, on the ground before the newly married couple as they come out of the church after the ceremony. This proves that the future path-way of the pair might always prove flower-strewn.

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RATNA MALLICK, MUKULIKA GHOSH,  
MANJUSREE GUHA MAJUMDAR

## **LIFE, SUPERSTITIONS AND CUSTOMS IN A BENGAL VILLAGE**

### **Introductory**

The history of Jharbuni, a typical simple, quiet and unadorned Bengal village, started about three decades ago, when a few Bauri families from distant villages called Logra and Krishnanagar migrated possibly due to the spread of some epidemic diseases in those areas. Now, most of them are employed as day labourers.

The village is under the Garbeta Police Station of Midnapur district, West Bengal. It is joined to the Garbeta railway station by an unmetalled road, which terminates at the Bannerjeedanga football ground, situated just outside the village. The water supply of the village is met by the big reservoir, outside the village, and a well, which is the main meeting place of all the womenfolk. The settlement pattern showed a haphazard cluster of mud walled, thatch-roofed huts, which are connected to one another by simple foot trodden path. Another important meeting place of the villagers is the tiny shrine of Manasa, a deity of the serpent, situated under the huge Banyan tree.

The village is also inhabited by a few Muchi (Leather worker) families along with the Bauris. Table I shows the population of the Bauris and Muchis in the village and in the district of Midnapur

**TABLE I**

### *Population of the village*

Name of the community	In the village				In the district			% present in the village
	No of families	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Bauri	29	71	77	148	5,814	6,581	12,395	
(Percentage)		48 %	52 %		46.92%	53.08%		1.195 %
Muchi								
(Leather worker)	3	7	8	15	4,451	4,046	8,497	
(Percentage)		46.6%	53.3%		52.38%	47.62%		0.176 %

Table II depicts a detailed consideration of the total population divided into 6 distinctive age-groups.

TABLE II  
*Age-Group of the village population*

Age Group	Bauris				Muchis			
	Male	%	Female	%	Male	%	Female	%
0-4	11	15.5	14	18.2	—	—	2	25.0
5-9	12	16.9	9	11.7	2	28.0	3	37.5
10-14	6	8.5	8	10.4	2	28.0	—	—
15-24	11	15.5	17	22.07	—	—	—	—
25-60	26	33.8	23	30.0	3	42.8	3	37.5
61+	5	7.04	6	7.8	—	—	—	—
Total	71	48%	77	52%	7	46.6%	8	53.4%

Here we find an agewise sex dominance. In the age groups, 0-4, 10-14, 15-24 and 61+ we find a female dominance over male, and in the age groups 5-9, and 25-60, a male dominance over female.

The literacy frequency among the villagers is very nominal. Table III shows that among 148 individuals of the village 141 are illiterate, while only 7 are literate. Again the percentage of illiteracy among the females are higher than among the males.

TABLE III  
*Literacy (Bauris only)*

Age Group	Male		Female	
	Literate	Illiterate	Literate	Illiterate
0-4	—	11	—	14
5-9	—	12	—	9
10-14	1	5	1	7
15-24	2	9	1	16
25-60	2	24	—	23
61+	—	5	—	6
Percentage	7.04	93.00	2.6	97.4
Total	5	66	2	75

### Occupation :

Out of the total population 67 persons of various age groups are found to do some work. This is shown in Table IV. The age-groups

0-4, 5-9, 10-14 and 61 and above are considered as non-labour force, while the age groups 15-24 and 25-60 are considered as labour force. The members who come under the category of working force are those, who have any job and belonging to the age group of labour force as well as non-labour force.

TABLE IV  
*Occupation (Labour Force and Non-labour Force)*

Group	Total Population		Non- Labour Force		Labour Force		Labour Force		Working Force	
Non-labour Force :					Total		Total		Total	
0-4	11	14	11	14	25	—	—	—	—	—
5-9	12	9	11	9	20	—	—	—	1	1
10-14	6	8	5	6	11	—	—	—	1	2
61+	5	6	2	6	8	—	—	—	3	3
Labour Force :										
15-24	11	17	—	—	—	9	12	21	9	12
25-60	26	23	—	—	—	26	13	39	26	13
Total	71	77	29	35	64	35	25	60	40	27
Percentage	48	52	45.3	54.7	58.3	41.67	59.7	40.3		

There are 2 males and 5 females in the age groups of 15-24 and 10 females in the age-group of 25-60 who do not work due to their physical deformations, which is shown in the table.

Table V describes the details of the occupation of the village.

TABLE V

*Occupation*

Types of occupations		Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Agricultural	Primary	2	2	4	8.5
	Secondary	—	—	—	—
Day Labourer	Primary	11	10	21	44.6
	Secondary	5	1	6	12.7
Business	Primary	5	—	5	10.6
	Secondary	—	1	1	2.1
Domestic servant	Primary	3	5	8	17.0
	Secondary	—	—	—	—

As the inhabitants of this village are very poor and do not possess any land of their own, they depend their living mainly on daily labour. Some of them are engaged in agricultural operation as hired labourers.

Some earn their living as domestic servants. A few old persons practise different types of business. Masonary and rickshaw pulling are the chosen profession of two Buari persons.

Earnings from a particular type of occupation are not sufficient, in majority of the cases, to maintain the families. So there is a shift towards secondary occupation, like those of day labourers. Age and sex are the two factors on which the nature of occupations are generally based. Females are rarely found to do agricultural work, while young boys and females only are found to earn their living as domestic servants. Social status has no direct bearing on the profession of an individual. It is found that even the village headmen did all sorts of jobs for their maintenance. The types of work are of various nature such as working in a local rice mill, the Relief Scheme of the Government, etc. For these various types of labour they are paid daily wages and in some cases they are provided with breakfast and lunch.

### **Communication**

Usually the old persons practise business. Some work as domestic servants in the house of wealthy people of different castes. They are paid either in cash or kind and are provided with both the principal meals. Usually they work as daily workers under the people of the upper strata in their agricultural operations when both the men and women workers work together with other needy men and women belonging to various castes and communities. The agricultural labourers come in contact with the blacksmith for buying various agricultural implements. The businessmen come in close contact with this customers with consist of various castes and communities. Domestic servants come to contact with the caste for whom he is working. Thus, the Bauris are found to come in close contact with peoples of variegated rank, status and philosophy. It is common expectation that the Bauris, may acquire some new traits into the matrix of their traditional culture due to this interaction.

### **Ritual Pattern**

Now, though they are deprived of Brahmanical assistance in many of their socio-religious rites, yet in respect of the marriage they try to consult the Brahmins. The Bauri males appease the deity and spirits on other supernatural potentials themselves by performing the rites, according to their own conventional pattern, but it has been seen in course of study that a few traits of Greater Hindu tradition have already been influenced them. The services of barber, washerman and blacksmith have crossed the village limit. Thus the old cultural pattern



has been uprooted and a new culture is emerging now in its place, due to constant relationship with different caste people.

Detailed information made in respect of ritual patterns associated with the birth, marriage and death show that it has very slight difference from those of the Greater Hindu castes. There are some prevalent restrictions or taboos among the Bauris, that should be observed by a pregnant woman, such as a pregnant woman must not cross the rope tied to a cow ; she should not go out of the hut at night, but if she has to do so she must put a piece of straw taken from the roof of the hut in her hair ; she is not to see birds flying at night ; on places like cremation ground should not be visited by a pregnant woman. The popular belief is that ghosts or evil spirits generally reside in such places and the baby may fall a victim to them and consequently die in the womb.

There is a common custom that a pregnant woman should be given a hearty feast on the fifth and on ninth month of her first pregnancy. All her relatives are called to partake of the grand feast, who usually made presentation of *sari* to her.

The mid-wife, locally known as '*dhaima*' who belongs to the untouchable caste attend the mother during child-birth, and cut the umbilical cord of the new born by means of a blade, and then tie it with a red thread and *durba*-grass. The placenta is buried in the ground in front of the door to avert the evil influence of the spirits.

On the 9th day after delivery, the barber is called to pare off the nails of the child and its mother. The washerman of the village takes all the unclean clothes for ritual purification. They are remunerated for their services.

The same purificatory ceremony is repeated on the 21st day, which is known as '*Ekushia*' ceremony. After this, the mother becomes ritually pure and can perform all household works. On this same day a name is given to the child by the midwife. All the relatives are invited to attend this ceremony. The midwife is given Rs. 10/- for all her services since the child-birth.

Among the Bauris, the first rice-eating ceremony is performed after six months in case of a son, and 7 months in case of a daughter. While among the Muchis it is performed after 6 months for both the sexes. An auspicious day is selected when offerings are made to Goddess Manasa for the sound health and longevity of the child. The woman rubs some turmeric paste and mustard oil on the child's body and then bathes the baby. Some more rituals are performed after which the maternal uncle of the child feeds the baby with a little rice pudding. All the relatives are invited in this ceremony. With this concludes all

the rituals and ceremonies connected with the birth of a child at Jharbuni village. Next we come to marriage ceremony.

## Marriage

The Bauri society is strictly monogamous in character, and caste endogamy is also observed. Marriage with someone of different caste is not looked upon with favour as there is the fear of being outcasted. Cousin marriage or marriage with any relatives is not permissible. Marriage by negotiation is the most common method of acquiring mates. The marriageable age for a young man is round about 20, while for the girl it is between 5 to 12 years. If the marriage takes place before the bride has attained puberty, the bride resides in her parent's home, and after the first menstruation, is taken to her husband's family. The following table shows the civil condition of the village.

TABLE VI  
*Civil condition (Bauris)*

Age Group	Unmarried		Married		Widow	Widower	Divorced	
0-4	11	14	--	--	--	--	--	--
5-9	12	9	--	--	--	--	--	--
10-14	5	3	1	5	--	--	--	--
15-24	6	1	5	14	--	--	--	2
25-60	1	--	25	15	8	--	--	--
61+	--	--	3	1	5	2	--	--
Total	35	27	34	35	13	2	--	2
Percentage	49.3	35.06	47.8	45.5	16.8	2.8	--	2.6

Usually the parents and relations of both sides choose the spouse. After the mutual consent of both parties, they go to a brahmin called Kanai Bhattacharya living next to the Garbeta High School for his consent. The prospective groom's and bride's names are given to him, as these are passed off as their horoscopes. Until and unless the brahmin gives a positive verdict, the bride's party would not touch any food at the groom's house. On hearing the positive verdict they partake of refreshments at the groom's place, which signifies that the marriage has been finalized.

Then an auspicious day is selected for the engagement ceremony which takes place both at the bride's and groom's house. In a Bauri wedding the maternal uncles play the major roles. The elders bless the spouse with unhusked paddy and *durba*-grass. The groom's relatives has to carry a ceremonial present for the bride to her house. It consists

of sweets, 50 paisa, a sari, a garland and a ghunshi. They also have to pay Rs. 3/- as bride price, of which 62 paise is returned to buy turmeric for the bride.

Then with the consultation of the village headman the wedding day is fixed for which the months like Phalgun (Feb.-Mar.), Aghrayan (Nov.-Dec.), Magh (Jan.-Feb.), Baishak (Apr.-May), Jaistha (May-June), and Ashar (June-July) are considered as auspicious.

The 'gai-halud' ceremony takes place two days before the wedding in case of the groom, while for the bride it takes place the day before the wedding. At this ceremony the spouse is anointed with turmeric by nine unmarried youths, along with some other rituals. The village headman gives a '*janti*' (betel nut cutter) to the groom and a '*kajal-lata*' (a receptacle for collyrium) to the bride.

The main wedding ceremony takes place in the bride's house. Before leaving for the bride's house some rituals take place in the groom's house, when the village headman ties some threads dyed in turmeric solution and *durba*-grass on the groom's wrist, which is known as 'hasta-bandhan'.

After reaching the bride's house, the groom is taken to the 'chadna-tala', a sort of booth erected in the middle of the courtyard while proceeding toward it he is assisted by the bride's brothers and sisters, for which they demand some money from the groom. Next the bride is brought to the 'chadna-tala' and taken round the groom nine times and then they exchange garlands between them. Among some more ceremonies the wedding knot is tied between the one corner of the bride's *sari* and the groom's shawl. Then the groom puts vermilion on the bride's hair parting with the '*janti*'. Thus they are accepted as married. The same night the '*phul-sajya*' or floral bed of the couple takes place when the bride and the bridegroom sleeps together for the first time.

Next morning the bride and the groom are again brought to the courtyard. The groom is made to stand on a '*piri*' or wooden seat and the bride on a stone slab. Then they are bathed by the bride's brother-in-law after which the groom alternately covers and uncovers the bride's head 3 times with a *sari*.

There is no fixed time for the send off but usually it takes place in the afternoon. Before the send off the couple is blessed by the bride's parents and other elders. On arriving at the groom's house they are welcomed by the groom's mother. Then 9 earthen pots filled with mustard seeds and rice is kept in front of them. The couple had to go round these pot 9 times and after each time the groom opened the lids of the pots and the bride put them on.

Then a pitcherful of water with a '*noa*' or iron bangle inside is

given to the couple from which the bride has to fish out the 'noa' which the groom puts on her wrist. Then the bride is made to take a basketful of rice on her head and a brass plate is overturned in front of her. She has to push the plate with her foot towards the house while the groom scattered the rice with the betel nut cutter. She then kept the plate and the basket at the corner of the room and collected the scattered rice. She is then taken to the kitchen and made to touch the pot containing cooked rice. A feast was given out to villagers on this occasion.

### **Sanga**

The Sanga marriage or widow re-marriage is quite common among the Bauris. In this sort of marriage either the bride or the groom is divorced, or widow, or widower or unmarried. There is no age limit for this type of marriage. Here, the couple has to seek only the village headman's permission in this marriage. If the man be unmarried, he is first wedded to a tree, such as pipal or banyan or sheora tree. Thence onward the tree is regarded as his first wife. The bride-price in this case is Rs. 15/- or Rs. 16/-, much higher than the bride-price for an ordinary marriage. This is because usually in this case the bride is an earning member of the family. Any day and any time can be chosen for this marriage, when the groom anoints some turmeric paste on the bride's back and the bride applies the paste on the groom's chest. This is how they are married.

### **Divorce**

Divorce is freely recognised among the Bauris. It is affected when the husband takes away from his wife the iron bangle which every married woman wears and is the sign of marriage in the Hindu families of upper and lower strata. One of the reason for divorce is due to too much age difference and because both the partners are earning members and thus self-supporting. Thus, in a Bauri society, marriage is not a very stable institution.

### **Death Rites**

Cremation is the customary method of disposal of the dead among the Bauris. The dead body is taken to the cremation ground on a bier made of 2 new bamboos and straw string. There is a taboo against going to the cremation ground at night. On reaching the cremation ground the eldest son of the dead had to buy a place from Mother Earth (*Dharitri*) by putting 9 *couri* on the place. Then a pit is dug and a pyre constructed. The eldest son applies the fire on the dead body.

Then the village headman makes a figure of a man with clay on the

ground, and a pitcher of water is placed on its chest. The reason behind this figure is the belief in rebirth of the deceased and also as a memorial. While coming back they have to place some thorns across the path and cross them, which is the sign of demarcation between the deceased and those who are alive.

The mourning period is observed for 10 days, during which period the mourners are forbidden to eating fish or meat, and have to cook their own food by themselves. They are also not allowed to use hair oil nor cut their hair or pare off nails in this *ashauch* period.

On the 11th day some rites are performed known as *sradh* ceremony. The village headman, the barber and the washerman's services are required in this ceremony. The barber shaves the head of the chief mourner or the deceased's sons, and pared off the nails of the other mourners. Then they take their bath and wear new clothes. The used clothes are taken away by the washerman, indicating the end of their pollution period. In the ceremony proper the chief mourner has to offer the rice ball, known as 'Alos Pondi' to the dead person. This is prepared from rice mixed with nails and locks of hair of female members and a small fish. The rice ball is then immersed in the water in the name of the deceased. The village headman, the barber and the washerman are paid for their services.

On the 12th day a paper chariot is made and everyone sing *kirtan* or devotional songs and played music in front of it. They believe that if this is done the spirit of the deceased will go to heaven in a flower-chariot. On the 13th day the villagers and relatives are entertained to a feast.

In case of death of a pregnant woman or a child or death occurred due to accident the body is buried. For a pregnant woman a long, narrow pit is dug and the body is placed in it with face downwards and legs and arms folded backward. This is done as a belief that the spirit of the deceased may not be able to come up. In case of the death of a child the mourning period is observed only by the mother for 3 days.

## Festivals

Festivals are the characteristic feature of the village life of Bengal. To the villagers it serves double purpose—religious and non-religious. It provides entertainment, joy and merry-making, and to the god-fearing, religious minded simple villagers, they have a far greater significance. Though the villagers of Jharbuni are economically handicapped, still their enthusiasm regarding the performing of festivals is unabounding. The god-abiding faithful and simple people never

attempts to deceive even the minute detail of their worship and offerings.

The various festivals and worships throughout the year, their feature, purpose, nature of offerings, etc. have been summarised in the forms of charts as found in Table VII and VIII.

TABLE VII  
*Festivals and worships*

Month	Festival and worship in honour of	General features	Other castes if participate
1. Baisak (April-May)	(i) Manasa, for 3 days, starts on the last day on sankranti (ii) Every Tuesday -- Jharbuni Sini	Communal basis  Individuals offer sacrifices	Present  Absent
2. Jaistha (May-June)	Dasahara	Communal basis	Present
3. Ashar (June-July)	Ambubachi	Communal basis	Present
4. Sravan (July-August)	Manasa, on the last day on sankranti	Family basis	Absent
5. Bhadra (August-Sept.)	(i) Bhadu - whole of the month (ii) Viswakarma, on the last day	Maidens  Only by mason	Absent  Absent
6. Aswin (Sept.-Oct.)	—	—	
7. Kartik (Oct.-Nov.)	(i) Manasa (ii) Diwali festival	Communal basis Communal basis	Present Present
8. Agrahayan (Nov.-Dec.)	(i) Manasa (ii) Itu - every sunday	Communal basis Women	Present Absent
9. Paush (Dec.-Jan.)	(i) Manasa (ii) Tusu	Communal basis Females only	Present Absent
10. Magh (Jan.-Feb.)	Manasa	Communal basis	Present
11. Phalgun (Feb.-March)	Manasa	Communal basis	Present
12. Chaitra (March-April)	(i) Manasa (ii) Sitala (iii) Nil-Sasti	Communal basis Individual female only	Present Present Absent

The next table speaks of the purpose and other details of the festivals—

**TABLE VIII**  
*Purpose of worship, nature of offerings and participants.*

Worship or festivals	Purpose	Nature of offerings	Participant
1. Manasa	To appease the deity of snakes, to make snakes lose their poison	Elaborate worship flowers, fruits, sweets, etc. are offered. A goat is sacrificed.	Sudhir Dule, the Dule priest, assisted by Brindaban Dule.
2. Bhadu	To commemorate Bhadu's death	No sacrifice. -Only flowers and sweets are offered.	Communal basis. Un-married girls of the village.
3. Viswak-arma	God of mechanics and technology	Elaborate worship. The oblation consists of fruits, sweets, incense lamp, etc.	Brindaban Dule assisted by his family members.
4. Bhaga-bati	For the welfare of cattle	Cattle are bathed and garlanded, and sweets are offered	Head of the family assisted by the elderly female members.
5. Itu	To please the Sungod in expectation of better yield of Rabi crop	Boiled sun dried rice and vegetarian dishes are offered	Womenfolk of the village
6. Tusu	Social festival	Communal basis Wedding of dolls representing Tusu, preparation of pancakes	Female members only
7. Sitala	To escape from the scourage of epidemic diseases like cholera, smallpox, etc.	Elaborate worship Goat is sacrificed in fulfilment of any vow made earlier	Rampati Dule, assisted by his family members.

The worships of Manasa is performed in the month of Baisakh is observed with greatest grandeur. It lasts for 3 days starting from the last day of Baisak. It has 3 phases. The worship of the 1st day is known as '*Kamale*' or '*ghat puja*,' when a new earthen vessal is placed in the temple. On the 2nd day after the worshipping a goat is sacrificed, the flesh of which is latter divided among the villagers. On the 3rd day the '*ghat*' and other articles used in the festival are immersed in the village tank. Manasa is worshipped even on other months.

### Conclusion

From the study of some festivals it is observed that many

regional Hindu deities have been incorporated in the religious pantheon of the Bauris, in course of a prolonged social interaction with the Hindus. In their methods of worship, many typical items offered by the Hindus during worship like, incense, lighted lamps, etc. are noticed. But they still do not have any incantations or sacred formulae of sanskritic origin in their worship or go through the details of the idioms of the rituals. Another interesting feature is the presence of a 'Tulsi-Mancha', which is a pyramidal earthen structure, bearing the sacred basil plant raised in the courtyard of many houses. The blowing of conch-shells by the females in the religious observances is perhaps also of Hindu influence.

To appease or propitiate these gods and goddesses, the Bauris make offerings and sacrifices for which specialists are needed and the community has such specialists amongst them, who work as priests. During invocation, the mercy of the deities are sought for, not only for the safety of an individual, but for the welfare of the community members, as well. They believe that elaborate worship and observance of rituals bring success and ward off misfortune and calamities. Hence they have clung to these modes of beliefs which have been translated into action through these observances.

This concludes the tale of the poverty stricken, unadorned, single villagers of Jharbuni, that is so typical of rural Bengal. They live in their mud-walled, thatch roofed humble dwellings that do not boast of wealth or luxury. On the contrary, these hutments provide enough comforts to these easily satisfied Bauris. They are people of few wants, so they are happy with what they have. They work without hope of prosperity and laugh and sing under labour and misery. So they will never become rich these simple, honest villagers, but will be happy in their own way. \*

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\*The work is done under the supervision of Dr. P. K. Bhowmick, Reader in Anthropology, University of Calcutta.

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## RADHA IN THE EYE OF THE PEOPLE OF TARAI REGION OF HIMALAYAN TRACT

Since the inception of Vaishnavism Radha is a household name in Bengal but one can find her first mention in *Brahmabaivarta Purana*. Some distinguished scholars like Bankimchandra Chatterjee, Roy Gaurgobinda Upadhyaya, Sashibhusan Dasgupta, Biman Bihari Majumdar and others have discussed Radha and Krishna theme in greater details from theoretical point of view, but they have not very much considered the feelings of the folk people as depicted in different genre of folklore. In folk songs and ballads Radha has been depicted quite differently than what is said about her by the *Mahajana Pada-kartas*. Here Radha is a grown up youth and has an attractive personality. In her a cry, as of a woman in distress, is heard. Radha is immanent in the universe, she is like the Absolute Being and the Creative Energy. Krishna is loved by everyone. He is a great hero. He left Radha and this leave of his has cast Radha in the sea of sorrow. How deep is the sorrow is described in the following songs which are published in original language. In a suitable issue of this journal free translation of these songs together with others may be given. It is narrated here that at the hour of grief there is none to give Radha words of consolation. In these songs the gaiety of Krishna has been depicted nicely. The expression ably reveal the gentle feeling of Radha. The delicate love and unbearable pang of separation are indescribable by words but the folk poets have applied proper words to express them without affecting the feelings.

It is from the beginning to the end these type of ballads or lyrics do not contain a single expression of manly feeling—of *womanly* feeling there is a great deal—or a single elevated sentiment. The bards have not a single *truth* to teach. Generally speaking, it is the poets and bards who teach us the great moral truths which render man's life a blessing to his kind ; but folk poets and bards that are concerned with Radha-Krishna legends do generally bear of another stamp. Soft, and mellifluous, feelingly tender and as often grossly sensual, their exquisitely sounding but not unfrequently meaningless verse echoed the common sentiments of an inactive effeminate race. We have preferred to give some specimens of such lyrics in the original language which have been collected from the Tarai Hill tract of the Himalayan range of northern part of Bengal because it is very popular even at the present day.

॥ ১ ॥

কাইক<sup>১</sup> কমলা মুখী তন প্রভূহে  
অন্ন<sup>২</sup> বয়সে ছিহু তোর  
তুই হে প্রভু সাতঘরি<sup>৩</sup> আকুলরে<sup>৪</sup>  
কি দিয়া বুঝামু<sup>৫</sup> তোকে<sup>৬</sup> ।

শব্দার্থ:—১। প্রকৃত শব্দ কাঁকন—অর্প, ২। অন্ন,  
৩। বহুজনের, ৪। ব্যাকুল, ৫। বুঝার্ব, ৬। তোমাকে ।

ভাবার্থ:—হে শ্রীহরি, হে আমার প্রাণেশ্বর,  
আমার কচি বয়সে যখন কমলা ও সোনার  
মতন আমার মুখের ও দেহের রং ছিল তখন  
থেকেই আমার সর্বস্ব একান্তেই তোমাতে  
অর্পণ করেছিলাম। মনে করেছিলাম—  
তুমিও তাই করবে, কিন্তু না, ভুল বুঝেছিলাম।  
তুমি তো আমার একার নও তুমি যে  
বহুজনব। তোমার বিরহে আমি যে কত  
ব্যাকুল, কত পীড়িত,—তা' তোমাকে কি  
বলে বুঝাব ?

॥ ২ ॥

ঘর হইল রণবন<sup>১</sup>  
এগিনাতে<sup>২</sup> গাজিল<sup>৩</sup> বেণুবন  
আর ভেল মোর দিবস আন্ধার রে  
পরের পুরুষ দেখিয়া  
নারীর মোর এক ম<sup>৪</sup> পরেরে ।

শব্দার্থ:—১। তছনহ ২। আন্ধিনা ৩। গজাইল  
৪। মনে পড়া।

ভাবার্থ:—কতকাল গত হল—রুষ বুন্দাবন

ছেড়ে মথুরায় চলে গেছে। আজ তার  
অভাবে শ্রীরাধার কুঞ্জের পূর্বের সে জৌলুষ  
নেই। ঘরবাড়ী তছনছ হয়ে পড়েছে,  
সারা আন্ধিনা বেণুবনে ছেয়ে গেছে।  
দিনের বেলাই চারদিক অন্ধকার। পবের  
ঘরকল্পা দেখে শ্রীরাধার তার প্রিয় স্বামীর  
কথা মনে পড়ে যায়। হাঃ, আমারও এক-  
দিন এমন স্থখের সংসার ছিলো।

॥ ৩ ॥

একেত<sup>১</sup> নিদারুণ<sup>২</sup> কুহিলী<sup>৩</sup> কুহিলীরে  
কতয়<sup>৪</sup> নিশি জাগ  
শখিরে ভাঙ্গিয়া রাধার কুঞ্জ  
ওহোরে মোর কতয় নিশি জাগ  
ভাঙ্গিয়া রাধার কুঞ্জ ।

শব্দার্থ:—১। একেই ২। নিষ্ঠুর ৩। কোকিল  
৪। কত ৫। এখানে স্থগের ঘর।

ভাবার্থ:—শ্রীকৃষ্ণের চিন্তায় শ্রীরাধিকার কত  
বিনিত্র রজনী কেটে গেল, প্রতি রাজে  
কোকিলের ডাকে বিরহ ব্যাথায় মন নতন  
করে বিষিয়ে উঠে। তাই মনের দুঃখে  
কোকিলকে সম্বোধন করে বলছেন, রে নিষ্ঠুর  
কোকিল, আমার কুঞ্জ, আমার স্থখের ঘরতো  
বহুদিন আগেই ভেঙ্গে গেছে। তুমি আর  
কত দিন এমনি করে ডেকে ডেকে আমার  
মন খারাপ করবে ? তুমি ডেকো না— তুমি  
থামো।

মাও<sup>১</sup> হোল<sup>২</sup> লোবনী<sup>৩</sup> তোয়  
বাণ তোর বাতেসা<sup>৪</sup>  
ওরে সখি মোর  
যেমন কাক<sup>৫</sup> সোনারে  
কসারে<sup>৬</sup> দোয়ামী ছিলো।

শব্দার্থ:—১। মা ২। হইল ৩। ননী ৪। এক  
প্রকার মিষ্টান্ন ৫। কঁচা ৬। ফোড়ের।

ভাবার্থ:—গায়েন গাহিছে,—ওগো শ্রীমতী  
রাধিকে, তোমার মা যেন ননী, বাপ যেন  
বাতাসার মত মিষ্ট, অর্থাৎ দু'জনেরই  
স্বভাব মধুর এবং নরম। তাইতো তুমি  
ছিলে মা বাপের একান্ত আদরের পাত্রী।  
আর তোমার কোলের স্বামী শ্রীকৃষ্ণ? সে  
তো কঁচা সোনার অলঙ্কারের মত তোমার  
অঙ্গ সব সময়ে ছড়িয়ে থাকতো। কিন্তু  
হায়, তুমি তাঁর এত সোহাগিণী হওয়া সত্ত্বেও  
সে নিদ্রাভাবে তোমাকে ছেড়ে চলে গেল!

॥ ৫ ॥

কাখে কোলে<sup>১</sup> নাইরে পুত্র  
উঠারে, কাকে<sup>২</sup> না পেঠামু<sup>৩</sup>  
মধুপুরে,<sup>৪</sup>

হে উঠে', তোকে যাইতে হবে মধুপুরে।

শব্দার্থ:—১। কোলেগিঠে ২। কাহাকে ৩। পাঠাব  
৪। মথুরা বৃত্তিতে হইবে।

ভাবার্থ:—উপরব শ্রীকৃষ্ণের প্রিয় ভাগিনেয়।  
তাকে সন্ধান করে শ্রীরাধা বলছেন,—ওরে  
বাছা উব! কোলে পিঠে আমার কোন  
পুত্র সন্তান নেই। আজকে আমার প্রাণের  
কৃষ্ণকে মথুরা থেকে এনে দেবে? তুমি  
তো আমার পুত্রের মতো, তুমিই মথুরায়  
যাও'—আমার কৃষ্ণকে এনে দাও।

ঘরের চালে উড়ে এসে কাক বসেছে।  
তাকে উদ্দেশ্য করে শ্রীমতী রাধিকা  
বলছেন—

কাহাসে<sup>১</sup> আয়েসা<sup>২</sup> কাগা<sup>৩</sup>  
কাহা উড়ি যাবে  
কি সন্দেশ আনিলা কাগা  
মোহে<sup>৪</sup> কহি যাবে।

শব্দার্থ:—১। কোথা থেকে ২। আসিলে ৩। কাক  
৪। আমাকে।

ভাবার্থ:—ওরে কাক, কোথা থেকে এলে,  
কোথাই বা যাবে? তুমি কিমথুরা থেকে  
আমার প্রিয় কৃষ্ণের কোন সুখবর এনেছ?  
যদি এনে থাকো, তবে আমাকে তা বলো।

॥ ৭ ॥

খাওরে খাওরে কাগা  
খাও মেরা মাংস<sup>১</sup>  
নয়ন বাখবা তুই<sup>২</sup>  
হরি মোর আশ।

শব্দার্থ:—১। মাংস ২। তুমি

ভাবার্থ:—রে কাক, যদি তুমি আমার  
সখার কোন সুখবর এনে থাক তবে দাও,  
তোমাকে আমার দেহের মাংস খেতে দেব।  
শুধু আমার নয়ন দু'টো তুমি চেয়ো না, কেন  
না আমার প্রাণে আশা—আমার প্রিয় হরি  
যদি কোনদিন ফিরে আসেন তবে নয়ন ভরে  
তাকে দেখব।

॥ ৮ ॥

কটুর<sup>১</sup> কহিয়ো কাগা  
কতু দেগা পেলে  
মরিছে তোমার রাধা  
যবুনারা<sup>২</sup> জলে।

শব্দার্থ:—১। কঠিন ২। যবুনা।

ভাবার্থ:—না না—আমি আর তাকে দেখতে চাই না, কৃষ্ণের দেখা পেলে বলে দিও তোমার রাধা তোমার শোকে যমুনার জলে প্রাণ ত্যাগ করেছে।

॥ ৯ ॥

হংসসাঁ<sup>১</sup> বলু<sup>২</sup> ফুৎফুৎ<sup>৩</sup>  
গগনে ওরে হংসা উড়িল রে  
হায় বাপ, গেল হংসা আকাশ  
বাহর<sup>৪</sup> নাহি সাধা আবতর<sup>৫</sup>

শব্দার্থ:—১। হংস ২। বলছি ৩। কাকুতি মিনতি করে ৪। কিরিয় ৫। আসা।

ভাবার্থ:—কখনো বা ঘরের লাগোয়া সরোবরের হাঁসকে উদ্দেশ্য করে বলছেন—ওরে হংস তোমায় কাকুতি মিনতি করে বললাম—আমার সখাকে খুঁজে এনে দাও, তুমিও আমার অধুরোধে গগনে মেলানি দিলে। কিন্তু হায় আমার পোড়া কপাল! তুমি আকাশেই থেকে গেলে, আর ফিরে এলে না। আমার প্রাণাধিক কৃষ্ণও আর ফিরে এলো না।

॥ ১০ ॥

অঙ্গ-সরবরে<sup>১</sup> ঘাম মেলাহে<sup>২</sup>  
কাজরা<sup>৩</sup> গেলরে ডাহায়ে,  
সিন্দুরা<sup>৪</sup> গেলরে ডাহায়ে  
জীব মেরা<sup>৫</sup> ভইল<sup>৬</sup> তারাস<sup>৭</sup>

ভুতেলা বালা মোর উঠিল জাগিয়া।

শব্দার্থ:—১। সারা অঙ্গ হইতে ২। বহে যাচ্ছে ৩। বাস ৪। তরে যাচ্ছে ৫। রক্ত ৬। আমার ৭। হইল। ৮। আস।

ভাবার্থ:—ওগে! সখিরা, আমার প্রিয় সখার চিন্তায় আজ আমার সারা অঙ্গে ঘাম বহে যাচ্ছে, সারা অঙ্গ ঘামে ঢেকে গেল।

আমার দেহের রক্ত জল হয়ে গেল। আমি ভীষণ জ্ঞাত হচ্ছি। শুয়ে ছিলাম। উঠে বসেছি। হায় সখি, আমার এ কি হল?

॥ ১১ ॥

ইয়া হো<sup>১</sup> ঘরেকে পুরব<sup>২</sup> লদী  
বহে লদী গহিত<sup>৩</sup> গুমার<sup>৪</sup>  
ইয়া হো মরা<sup>৫</sup> সাইয়া<sup>৬</sup> অহুসা<sup>৭</sup>  
মুরারীরে—

কোন ঘাটে উতারাল পার।

শব্দার্থ:—১। ওহে ২। পূর্ব ৩। নদী ৪। গভীর ৫। ষমধমে ভাব ৬। আমার ৭। সখা। ৮। ক্রুদ্ধ

ভাবার্থ:—হে ভাই পথিক,—ঘরের আগেই তো যমুনা নদী। সর্বত্র গভীর, সর্বত্র ষমধমে ভাব। কোথাও কোন ঘাটে নেই বললেই চলে। হে পথিক, তবে কোন ঘাটে দিয়ে পার হয়ে গেল আমার অভিমাত্রী সখা, কোন আঘাটায় পার হতে গিয়ে তার কোন অমঙ্গল হয় নি তো!

রাধার মনে এমনি আবোল তাবোল ভাবটা।

॥ ১২ ॥

যাইমু মরাদ দেশে

আনিমু পুরক পাত<sup>১</sup>

লিখি পাতি<sup>২</sup> মোর ভেজামু সাধাকে  
হে উধো,

শব্দার্থ:—১। ভূজপত্র ২। লিপি

ভাবার্থ:—কখনো বলছেন,—হে বাছা উধ! আমি নেপাল হতে ভূজপত্র আনব, তা'তে পত্র লিখে আমি আমার সখার কাছে আমার সংবাদ পাঠাব।

এলাকি<sup>১</sup> পলাকি সেজা

দুইহি মিলি শুতি ছিল।

নিন্দেরে আলসে পেয়বা<sup>২</sup>

চলালা বিদেশ।

নাহি দেখেগে। নয়ন ভরমে।

শকার্ধ:—১। হুসজ্জিত ২। প্রিয়

ভাবার্থ:—পালকের উপর হুসজ্জিত বিছানায়  
আমরা দু'জনে শুয়েছিলাম কিন্তু ঘুমের  
ঘোরে আমার প্রিয় আমার ছেড়ে বিদেশে  
(মথুরায়) চলে গেলেন। হায়' আমি  
তাকে দু'নয়ন ভরে দেখতে পেলাম না!

রোদ<sup>১</sup> কোলে<sup>২</sup> এটেজি<sup>৩</sup>

রোদ কোলে ফোটজি<sup>৪</sup>

দয়া কর মেঘা ঠাকুর<sup>৫</sup>

বালক সোয়ামী মোর

রাগ বদলিকা<sup>৬</sup>

শকার্ধ:—১। রোজ ২। করিল ৩। ঝাঁঝ  
৪। ঝাঁঝ ৫। মেঘ ৬। মেঘাচ্ছন্ন।

ভাবার্থ:—শ্রীরাধিকা দেখছেন—বৃন্দাবনের  
চারিদিকে রোজ ঝাঁঝ—করছে, সবজ  
খাঁ খাঁ ভাব, মথুরার অবস্থা ও হয়ত এখন  
এইরূপ। সেখানে কোথাও হয়ত শ্রীকৃষ্ণ  
রোদেই ঘুরে বেড়াচ্ছেন, তাতে না জানি  
তিনি কত কষ্ট পাচ্ছেন। তাই শ্রীরাধিকা  
মেঘকে উদ্দেশ্য করে বলছেন—হে জলের  
দেবতা! তোমাকে অনুরোধ জানাই তুমি  
দয়া করে আকাশ মেঘাচ্ছন্ন কর, বৃষ্টিপাত  
হোক মথুরায়। যেন আমার কচি স্বামীর  
সেখানে যেন কোন ক্লেশ না হয়।

মাছে চিলে গাহিত গুমার<sup>১</sup>

পক্ষী চিনে ডাল

মায়ে জানে পুত্রের দয়া

বহিনী জানেরে ভায়া

কলারে পুরুষ চিনে

আর যে, কাইক থানা<sup>২</sup>

শকার্ধ:—১। গভীর জল ২। কাঁচা সোনা।

ভাবার্থ:—মাছের প্রিয় গভীর জল, পক্ষীর  
প্রিয় গাছের ডাল, মায়ের কাছে প্রিয় তার  
পুত্র, ভগ্নীর প্রিয় তার ভাই,—আর জীর  
প্রিয় তার স্বামী।

হায়, সখি! সে প্রিয় স্বামী আমার  
আজ যে কাঁচা সোনার মত আমার জড়িয়ে  
থাকত!

হাম নারী অভাগনী

স্বামী থাকিতে হুঁ রাঁড়ী

হৃদয় মাঝে প্রেম নদীতে বহে

হায় রে দিন রাত্রি।

ভাবার্থ:—আমি বড় অভাগিনী নারী  
কেননা স্বামী বর্তমান থাকতে আমি বৈধব্য  
যন্ত্রণা ভোগ করছি। আমার বুকের মাঝে  
দিনরাত্রি প্রেম নদী বয়ে যাচ্ছে।

ফাটেক<sup>১</sup> গে ধরতি মা<sup>২</sup>

তোর হে<sup>৩</sup> তলে ষাউ<sup>৪</sup>

আনিয়া দে মাদুর বিষ

জলে গুলে ষাউ<sup>৫</sup>

শকার্ধ:—১। কেটে চৌচির হওয়া ২। হে মা ধরিজী  
৩। তোমার ৪। ঘাই ৫। থাই।

ভাবার্থ:—শ্রীরাক্ষিকার জীবনের উপর যোর  
বিতৃষ্ণা এসে গেছে, তাই স্বখেদে বলছেন—  
হে মা ধরিত্রী, তুমি বিধা হও, আমি তোমার  
বুকে প্রবেশ করি, অন্তর্যামি মাতুর বিষ খেয়ে  
প্রাণত্যাগ করব, হে বিধাতা! স্বামী বিহনে  
এ জীবনে বেঁচে আর আমার লাভ কি?

॥ ১৮ ॥

রাজা কাদে রাজ্য দিনে  
পক্ষী বিনে পেজবা শূন্য যে,  
শূন্য হইল মোর  
এ চারি মন্দিলের  
হাম ধনী একালা।

ভাবার্থ:—কাল যে রাজা ছিল ভাগ্যচক্রে  
আজ সে পথের ফকির, এই রাজ্যহীন রাজা  
কাদবেই তো।

পক্ষী পুষবো বলে খাঁচা কিনলাম, আশাব,  
মুখে ছাউ দিয়ে পাখী উড়ে গেল। শূন্য খাঁচা  
পড়ে রইল।

আমি কত চেষ্টায় স্বামী সঙ্গ পেলাম,  
কিন্তু হায় স্বামী আমায় ছেড়ে চলে গেলেন,  
আজ আমি একাকিনী দিন কাটাচ্ছি।

॥ ১৯ ॥

হলদা কুম্ভে এখে<sup>১</sup> রং  
ওঁক শু মোর সখিরে  
বেহাতী<sup>২</sup> শুয়ামী<sup>৩</sup> মোর  
হায়বে এষ যম।

শব্দার্থ:—১। একরূপ ২। বিবাহিত ৩। স্বামী।  
ভাবার্থ:—সখি, হলুদ ফুল চিবদিনই হলদে।  
তার রং-এর কোনদিনই পরিবর্তন হবে না।  
ঠিক তেমনি নারীরও বিবাহিত স্বামী  
একজনই। আমাব স্বামী শ্রীকৃষ্ণ ছাড়া  
আর কে?

। ২০ ।

যেমন কদম ফুল গুইলাখা<sup>১</sup>  
মোর সাইয়া ছিলরে  
হায়রে ফুল দেখি মূই  
কেই সে<sup>২</sup> বান্ধামু  
ওহোরে কদমের ফুল।

শব্দার্থ:—১। উইষতন ২। কেমন করে।

ভাবার্থ:—সখি, তোমরা তো জান এত  
কদম বৃক্ষ আমার সখার কত প্রিয় ছিল।  
বসন্তের সমাগমে সারা বৃক্ষ ফুলে বাকমক  
কবত, আমার সখা যখন গাছে চড়ে বসে  
থাকতেন মনে হত তিনিও যেন একটা  
কদম ফুল। তিনি আজ নেই, শুধু ফুল দেখে  
আমার এ প্রিয়া বেধে রাখব কেমন হবে?

॥ ২১ ॥

গাথিয় ফুলের মালা  
মালা হোল মোর হালাঝালা  
সায়ী বিনে কায় দেখিবে  
মোর সোনার বদন দেখা রে সখি।

ভাবার্থ:—গুণো সখি, পড়ব বলে কত  
আসায় ফুলের মালা গাঁথলাম। সে মালা  
শুকিয়ে ছিন্নভিন্ন হয়ে গেল। আমার সোনার  
মত দেহে এত রূপ, সখা নেই কে দেখবে?

॥ ২২ ॥

ফান্দ<sup>১</sup> জুরু<sup>২</sup> পাতে পাতে<sup>৩</sup>  
পক্ষি বেড়ায় ডালে ডালে  
উডিল কুকিল বলে  
অনেক দূর যে  
মন্ মেরা উদাস সায়ী বিনে।

শব্দার্থ:—১। ফাঁদ ২। পেতেছি ৩। যেখানে  
সেখানে।

ভাবার্থ:—পাখী ধরব বলে ঘেঁষানে সেখানে  
ফাঁদ পাতলাম কিন্তু চতুর পাখী কিছুতেই  
ফাঁদে ধরা পড়ল না।

হে আমার প্রিয় শ্রীহরি, তোমারও  
মন পাবার জ্ঞাত কত চেষ্টা করলাম কিন্তু  
কিছুতেই তোমার মন পেলাম না। তুমি  
নির্দয়ভাবে আমাকে ছেড়ে গেল। হায়  
সখি, আজ আমার সখা বিহনে আমার মন  
একেবারে ফাঁকা হয়ে গেছে।

॥ ২৩ ॥

চৈত না বৈশাখ ধূপে ধূপে  
কায়<sup>২</sup> বসিবে যাহা<sup>৩</sup> পাশে  
পাশের মোর কায় দিবে  
বেহুয়া<sup>৪</sup> ভালায়<sup>৫</sup> যে সখি।

বেহুয়া ভালায়।

শব্দার্থ:—১। তীব্র গরমে ২। কে ৩। গিরে.  
৪। পাখা ৫। বাতাস দেওয়া।

ভাবার্থ:—আজ আমার স্বামী বহু দূরে।  
চৈত্র বৈশাখ মাসের তীব্র গরমে যখন তিনি  
ছটফট করবেন তখন কে তাঁর পার্শ্বে বসে  
তাঁকে পাখার বাতাস করবে?

॥ ২৪ ॥

তিরির<sup>১</sup> গোভাং<sup>২</sup> পুরুষ<sup>৩</sup>  
পুরুষের শোভাং তিরি

পুত্রের শোভাং মুখের হাসি

অভাগিনীর নাইরে পুত্র

কি হবে এ জীবের<sup>৪</sup> গতি<sup>৫</sup>

শব্দার্থ:—১। স্ত্রী ২। শোভা ৩। এখানে স্বামী  
৪। জীবন্ত ৫। মুক্তি।

ভাবার্থ:—গায়েন গাহিছে—ওগো শ্রীমতী  
রাধিকে! জীলোকের শোভা তার স্বামী

—স্বামীরও শোভা তার স্ত্রী। পুত্রের শোভা  
তার মুখের মধুর হাসি, ওহো আজ  
তোমার স্বামী কাছে নেই। তুমি মরলে  
তোমার মৃত দেহের কে সংকার করবে?  
পুত্র নেই তোমার শ্রাদ্ধ করবে কে? তোমার  
মুক্তিই বা হবে কেমনে?

॥ ২৫ ॥

কার্তিক অযুগ<sup>১</sup> দিন পায়বো<sup>২</sup>

ধরাবো মুঠি ষোগিনীকা ভেস<sup>৩</sup>

প্রেম দিয়া হবিকে বাঙ্কাবো

খুঁজাব, সখি দেশ না বিদেশ।

শব্দার্থ:—১। অগ্রহায়ণ ২। পাইব ৩। বেশ।

ভাবার্থ:—ওগো সখিরা, তোমরা দেখো,  
অল্প দিনের মধ্যে আমি ষোগিনীর বেশে  
প্রিয়কে খুঁজতে দেশে দেশে ঘুরে বেড়াব।  
পেলেই তাঁকে প্রেমের ফাঁস দিয়ে বাঁধব।

॥ ২৬ ॥

যে বেলা সোয়ামী ছিলো

হিতজন<sup>১</sup> বন্ধু ছিলো

নিতে নিতে<sup>২</sup> করাতাম

মুঠি দশমুনি ভজন।

শব্দার্থ:—১। হিতাকাঙ্ক্ষী ২। নিত্য।

ভাবার্থ:—ওগো সখিরা, তোমরা তো  
দেখেছো যখন আমার জনপ্রিয় স্বামী  
বৃন্দাবনে বর্তমান ছিলেন, তখন আমাদের  
কতো হিতাকাঙ্ক্ষী ছিল। সারা বাড়ীটা  
তখন লোকজনে কী সরগমই থাকত, নিজের  
হাতে কত সুখাণ্ড রান্না করে নিত্য নিত্য  
কতজনকে না খাওয়াতাম।

॥ ২৭ ॥

কি হায়রে—

সোয়ামী চলিয়া গেল

বিপদ ঘটিয়া গেল

মোর হুঃখ পড়িলা নিদান।

ভাবার্থ:—কিন্তু হায়, আজ আমার স্বামী  
এখানে নেই, আজ আর কেহই এখানে  
আসে না, আজ আমার বড়ই দুর্দিন।

॥ ২৮ ॥

ছটয়<sup>১</sup> পুষ্টি<sup>২</sup> বেটি অলনে

জলনে সে

বড বেটি সৌখির সিন্দুর

আর কত রহাবো<sup>২</sup> তুই

বাপ ভাই লাগি<sup>৩</sup>

যুগল লাগিয়া যাবো, হায়।

শুভরাল।

শব্দার্থ:—১। ছোট ২। রহিব ৩। এখানে সঙ্গে

ভাবার্থ:—বাপের বাড়ীর কথা মনে পড়ে  
গেল। রাধার বিয়ের বয়স হয়েছে। তাই  
তার মা তাকে সযোজন করে বলছেন—  
তুমি মা যখন ছোট ছিলে কত কষ্ট করেই  
না তোমাকে আমি মানুষ করেছি। এখন  
তোমার বিয়ের বয়স হল, তোমাকে এখন  
চিরদিনের মত শুভর বাড়ীতে থাকতে হবে।  
হায় মেয়েকে আমি ছাড়ব কি করে?

॥ ২৯ ॥

আরি হো<sup>১</sup> ঘরকা পুরব লদী

বহে লদী গহিত গুমার

পার কর ভায়। নারিষাল<sup>২</sup>

যাবা<sup>৩</sup> লাগে মোক<sup>৪</sup> দূর শম্বরাল,

শব্দার্থ:—২। আরেহে ২। নাবিক ৩। যেতে  
হবে ৪। আমাকে।

ভাবার্থ:—সে দিন আমি শুভর বাড়ী যাব।  
সেজেগুজে নদীর পারে গেলাম। যমুনায়  
অগাধ জল, সর্বত্র থমথমে ভাব। নাবিককে  
ডাকলাম—হে ভাই নাবিক—আমি শুভর  
বাড়ী যাব। দূর পথ। তুমি আমাকে যমুনা  
পার করে দাও।

॥ ৩০ ॥

ওরে ও নারিষাল

তুইরে ঘটালো জঞ্জাল

হাল ছাড়ি ধরিলো বাঁশী

ভুলালো মোর শুভরাল

কাদে যে পরিত্র, নায়ে হুঃ বাধা

বাজিয়া উঠিল বাঁশী

বলে রাধা রাধা।

ভাবার্থ:—হে নাবিক, তুমি আমায় বিপদে  
ফেললে। তুমি তো প্রকৃত নাবিক নও।  
তুমি চতুর বংশীধারী ক্রীড়ার। হাল ছেড়ে  
বাঁশী ধরলে—বাঁশী রাধা রাধা বলে বেজে  
উঠল! আমি হুঃখ বাড়ীর কথা ভুলে  
গেলাম। তোমার চাতুরীর ফাঁদে আমি  
বাধা পড়লাম। এখন আমি কি করি?

॥ ৩১ ॥

ছোট ছোট নেবুগুলা<sup>১</sup> মোর

কে তুলালা<sup>২</sup> রে—

আহারে রাখিবু নেবুগুলা মুই

সাইয়ার সনদেশ<sup>৩</sup>

তরা এসাবে পরদেশিয়ারে

রাখিছু লেবু মুই

সাইয়ার সনদেশ।

শব্দার্থ:—১। নেবু ২। তুলিল ৩। সন্দেশ।



ভাবার্থ:—বে উধো, মাধো, তোমরা নেবু  
তুলছ কেন? তোমাদের মামা আমার  
প্রাণের সখা কৃষ্ণের জন্ম ঘে নেবুগুলি  
রেখেছিলাম! নেবুগুলি ছোট ছোট কিন্তু  
খুব মিষ্ট, এগুলি তার বড় প্রিয় বস্তু বিদেশ  
(মথুরা) থেকে ফিরে এলে তাঁকে খেতে দেব  
কি? তোমরা তুল না।

॥ ৩২ ॥

সাগরের কূলে কূলে পাপিয়া মনজু২  
সখিরে পাপিয়া মনজুর  
বিনা পুরুষে২ নাহি সুভে৩  
সীতারে সিন্দুর,  
আরিছো নয়নের কাজল।

শব্দার্থ:—১। হৃদয়িত্ত করে ডাকা। ২। এখানে  
স্বামী ৩। শোভা পাওয়া।

ভাবার্থ:—সখি, সাগরের তীরে তীরে বনজ,  
বুক্ষে বুক্ষে পাপিয়া ডাকেতে শুরু করেছে।  
আজ পাপিয়াব ডাকে আমার ও প্রিয়র কথা  
বার বার মনে পরছে। হায়, স্বামী বিহনে  
সিঁথির সিন্দুর, নয়নের কাজলের মূল্য কি?

॥ ৩৩ ॥

বাড়ীঘর ছাড়িলো স্বামী  
গেলো স্বামী মথুরা উড়ায়  
দুই নয়নে স্বামী  
দেখানি লো যায়।

ভাবার্থ:—হে আমার প্রিয় স্বামী, তুমি  
আজ এই ঘর বাড়ী—এই স্থানের বন্দাবন  
ছেড়ে চলে গেলে! তোমার বিহনে আজ  
এখানে সর্বত্র খাঁ খাঁ করছে। এ অসহনীয়  
দৃশ্য আর চোখে দেখতে পারছি না!

॥ ৩৪ ॥

কি করিমু বড় ঘর  
কি করিমু বড় বাড়ী  
শুন সখি, ও সজ্বনীয়ে  
নিকিলিয়া যাচ্ছ  
ঘরের বিধিনি

ভাবার্থ:—ওগো সখিরা,—আজ আমার  
প্রিয়তম কৃষ্ণ নেই, এই বড় ঘর, বড় বাড়ী  
নিষে আমি কি করব? এই দেখে কি  
আমার মন শান্ত হবে? আমার নিজের  
দোষে আজ তাঁকে হাবিয়েছি, আমিই বাড়ীর  
আপদ স্বরূপ—আমিই আজ বাড়ী ত্যাগ  
করে যেদিকে ছুঁচোখ চায় চলে যাব।\*

\*An interesting article entitled as "Romantic life of the Epic Hero Krishna as depicted in the folksongs of Mundas", in February, 1970 issue of "Folklore" may be referred to study.— ed.

To be shortly published

Two Bengali Books

1. *UTTAR RARER LOKA SANGEET* (Folksongs of northern part of Raich Fanga) By Dilip Kumar Mukherjee
2. *LANHA-O-ISPAT* (Iron and Steel), By Dr. H. N. Roy

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## REVIEWS OF BOOKS

**ETHNOLOGY IN FOLKLORE**, by George Laurence Gomme, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1892. viii+200 pages, London: Reissued by Singing Tree Press, a division of Gale Research, Detroit, 1969. \$ 7.80.

The science of folklore involves two main phases—collection and interpretation. Most nineteenth century folklorists devoted their efforts to collect the material and supplying brief and often unorganized notes. A pioneer in folklore methodology, Gomme employed an ethnological approach to arrive at basic and much needed systems of classification. It will be found by students of folklore and ethnology as a work of much suggestive value and interests; and his theory, when properly applied, will doubtless afford useful explanations of many problems of history and mythology.

The six chapter heading give an idea of the form that the investigation takes: "Survival and Development," "Ethnic Elements in Custom and Ritual," "The Mythic Influence of a Conquered Race," "The Localisation of Primitive Belief," "The Ethnic Genealogy of Folklore," and "The Continuation of Races."

In the Preface the author writes—"that the time has come when every item of folklore should be docketed and put into its proper place, and I hope have done something towards this end in the following pages." The reviewer fully agrees with author's comment. The author also discusses that if peasant culture and savage culture are now at many points in close contact, how far may we go back to find the beginning of that contact? All the evidence goes to prove that the peasant have inherited rude and rational practices and ideas from savage predecessors—practices and ideas which have never been displaced by civilisation. To deal adequately with these survivals is the accepted province of science of folklore, and it must point out the causes for their arrested development, and the causes for their long continuance in a state of crystallisation or degradation after the stoppage have been effected. And this requirements can only be met by hypothesis which directly appeals to the racial elements in the population.

Gomme maintained that "The essential characteristic of folk-lore is that it consists of beliefs, customs, and traditions which are far

behind civilisation in their intrinsic value to man, though they exist under the cover of a civilized nationality." By isolating ethnological elements in European folklore and then using a comparative method to examine them, Gomme was able not only to reveal much about the nature and diffusion of lore but also to formulate principles and laws of folklore. It is a distinguished scholarly and suggestive study which must be kept in the library of everybody interested in folklore study.

A DICTIONARY OF ORIENTAL QUOTATIONS (*Arabic and Persian*), by Field, Claud Herbert, London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., 1911. vi+351 pages. Republished by Gale Research Company, Detroit, 1969. \$13.50.

"You ask what is this life, so frail, so vain,  
'Tis long to tell, yet I will make it plain,  
'Tis but a breath blown from the vasty deeps,  
And then blown back to those same deeps again."  
(Omar Khayyam)

One of the most respected of the early attempts to succinctly present the best of Oriental thought, Field's *Dictionary* contains over 1500 proverbs and famous stanzas highlighting the wisdom and beauty to be found in the literature of the Arabic and Persian civilizations. The quotations were carefully selected from classical poetry, religious texts, and other sources. Hafiz, Omar Khayyam, Jalaluddin Rumi, Hariri, Abu'l Ala, Diwan-i-Shans-i-Tabriz, Anwar-i-Suheili, and seventy-eight other Oriental authors are represented. In transliterating Arabic the compiler has adopted the system of Prof. Palmer in his *Arabic Manual* and in transliterating Persian he adopted the way of Tolbort's 'Robinson Crusoe'.

The arrangement is alphabetical by the first word of the transliterated Arabic or Persian quotation, with identification of the source, followed by an authoritative translation by an identified oriental scholar. The index of authors and the index of subjects and key words aid the student in his search for specific sayings.

BANSHPAHARI, a village study monograph, ed Debabrata Chakravarti, Academy of folklore, Calcutta, 1970. Rs. 3 00.

Banspahari, a village of Midnapur district of West Bengal, has a mixed population of plains and tribes, has been surveyed by a group of workers under the guidance of Dr. Dulal Chaudhury. It is a report in Bengali where a foreword has been written by Dr. P. K. Bhowmick. The report consists of different aspects of life and living of the village folks of the village under study.

## EDITORIAL

It is a matter of a very great pleasure indeed that The Jamia Millia Islamia is celebrating its Golden Jubilee this month. Like Kashi Vidyapith and the Gujarat Vidyapith or the National Education Council of Bengal this institution of Aligarh drew to its patriotic students and teachers, who had boycotted the educational institutions in 1920. The British rulers regarded these institutions with deep suspicion and did not recognise their degrees. The students passing out from these national institutions could not hope to get Government jobs. Most of them lived and worked for national emancipation, without caring for worldly gains. For most of the time, these institutions faced with extreme financial difficulties. At a critical juncture, the Jamia's trustees decided to close it down. A number of distinguished leaders like Hakim Ajmal Khan, Maulana Muhammad Ali, Dr. M. A. Ansari, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Dr. Zakir Hussain and Shaikh-ul-Hind Maulana Mahmood-ul Hassan kept the flame burning.

It was in 1925 that the Jamia was transferred from Aligarh to Delhi which after the death of Hakim Ajmal Khan again faced a threat of closure for want of funds. Generous donations from Seth Jammna'al Bajaj and Seth Jamal Muhammad of Madras enabled it to survive. Meantime in March 1926, Dr. Zakir Hussain, late President of India, returned from Germany and formed the Society for National Education, with a membership pledge of 20 years' service on a salary not exceeding of Rs. 150 a month. Eleven years later, the Society converted itself into the Society of Jamia Millia Islamia Society. It was around 1936 that the Jamia Millia started shifting from Karol Bag to the present site near Okhla, on the bank of river Jamuna. After Independence, the Jamia has been given the status of a University. It is an institution of education in the art of co-operative purposeful living within the framework of secularism, inspired by religious, moral and patriotic values. The doors of the Jamia are open to the students of all religious communities in the following institutions (i) The Jamia Nursery School; (ii) The Jamia Primary School; (iii) The Jamia Higher Secondary School; (iv) The Jamia College; (v) The Jamia Teachers College; (vi) The Jamia School of Social Work, and others.

During these fifty years, the Jamia's academic work and educational activities have earned for it a prominent place in the world of education. We wish this and the type organisations hundreds of Golden Jubilee since they are the torch bearer of tradition.

## Some Useful Books

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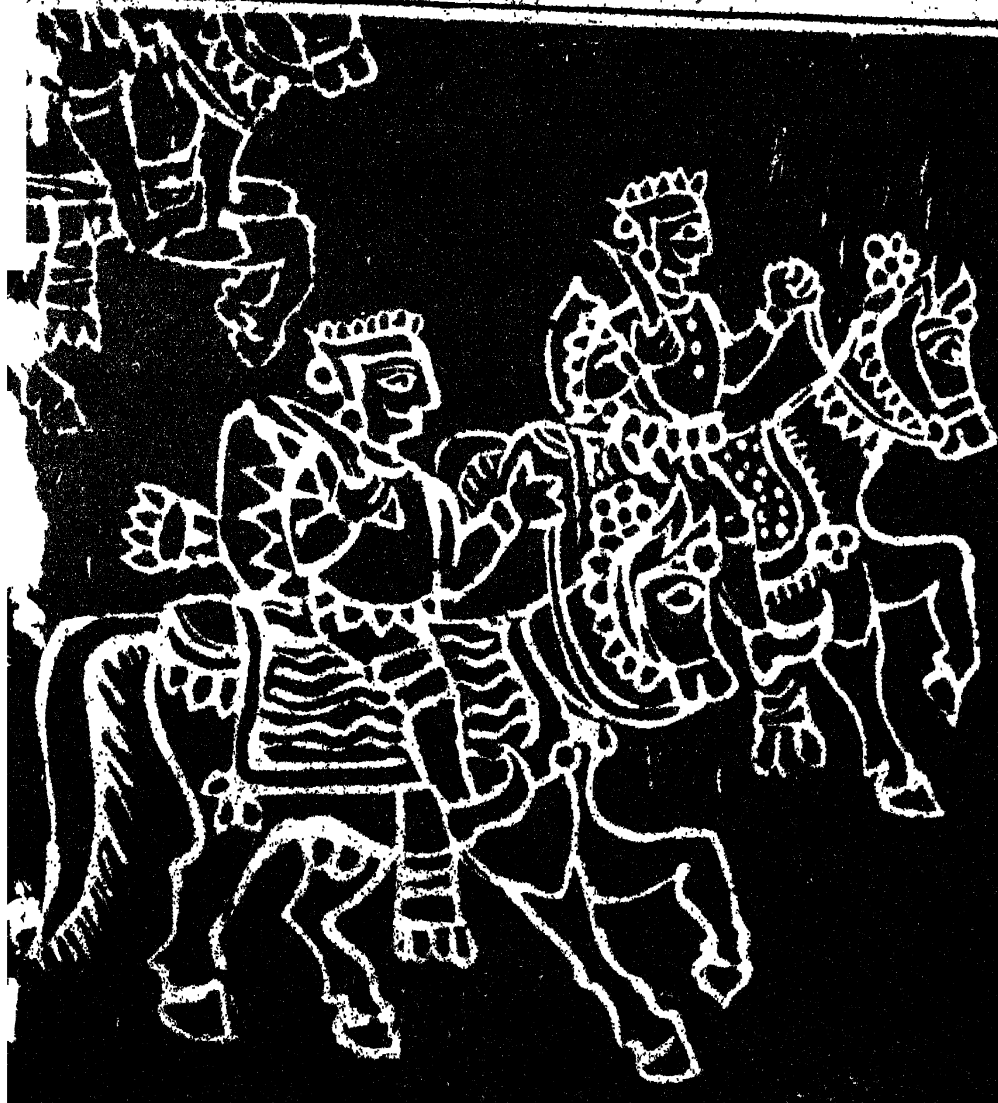
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SATIYA PRAKASH ARYA

## PIRAN-KALIYAR AT SAHARANPUR IN UTTAR PRADESH

The orthodox people, in the district Saharanpur, irrespective of the Hindu or Muslim, have a deep faith in the worship of Peers and happen to be staunch devotees of the system. The term 'Peer' refers to some old, worldly-wise and an experienced noble personality, having done some adventure and possessing miraculous and charismatic proficiency. He is treated to be a religious leader also and an expert in philosophy. The so-supposed god-like human incarnation is believed by the rural folk and even very often by the urban population, as their guide and helper to solve various complications. After his death, people's sentiments toward that pious soul strengthened further. Their dead bodies are always buried underground and never allowed to be otherwise disposed of. The Muslims, according to their usual practice, bury the dead in the customary style, in some sacred place, away from the residential area, to maintain its sanctity and leaving the place undisturbed in any way. To ensure its safety, a tomb-like structure is further constructed upon it in various artistic architectural designs and the particular shrine-spot is known as the "DARGAH-SHARFEH" of the Peer concerned, where the worshippers go for visit, known as *Ziyarat*. In the same way, there is reference in Hindu culture that the dead bodies of such pious persons (the so-believed *Devta* or even the *Atma*, i.e. some abode of God) are buried underground, treating that the *Mahatma* (the sacred soul) has taken an *Asan* (seat) for *Samadhi* or retired from this world and relieved himself of the physical form. A specially-designed construction is raised upon the sacred place and it becomes a place of significance for orthodox

Hindus to go there for the purpose of worship. The spirit behind both, i.e. the Dargah and the Samadhi, is a recollection of the sacred deeds and the life-sketch of the pious personality, buried underground.

So far as the Saharanpur district is concerned, the two Peers are significantly recognised by the local people—the *Gugga-Peer* and the and the *Kaliyar-Peer*. The origin of the former is differently believed by the Hindus and Muslims. Some say, he was a Hindu and the other believes that he was a Muslim but the latter belongs only to Muslim over which there is no two opinion. To commemorate these Peers annual fair is held every year. The present paper is an attempt to bring out a cultural glimpse of the fair, known as *Piran-Kaliyar* in memory of *Miyan Sabir*, the *Kaliyar-Peer*. The function is observed by the contributor on the 3rd and 4th of July, 1966.

The fair is named after the neighbouring village Kaliyar, about 34 miles away from Saharanpur, toward Roorkee, on the Roorkee-Hardwar Road and about 3.5 miles from Roorkee proper, just alongside the Ganges near Mahewar village. It begins, according to Muslim calendar, in the Rabiulawwal (the 12th month of the *Hijri* Year) in the bright fortnight and it actually reaches on its full bloom about the 10th of the moon-date, thus continuing on peak-level for four days, and closing by the 14th moon-date. As the occasion depends upon the movements of moon, according to Muslim calendar, no definite equivalent time can be ascertained according to English (Christian) calendar, which varies from year to year.

Piran Kaliyar fair is held in memory of Muslim Peer, Alauddin Ali Ahmad Sabri, often known as Sabri Miyan, and dates back of about 200 years. About the charismatic adventures of this leader, various myths, legends and beliefs are commonly narrated. It is said that Sabri's mother was a widow, having only one living issue with her. She, with a view to his better care and look-after, left him (Sabir) with her brother, (i.e. his maternal uncle) who put his own property under Sabir's charge, advising the young boy to feed and distribute from it among others as charity (*Khila aur Luta*-- *खिला और लुटा*), himself also settled elsewhere. Ali Sabri started and continued doing work according to the instructions of his maternal uncle. When after twelve years, his mother and maternal uncle came back to see him, both of them found him (Sabir) to have very very reduced, having gone very lean and thin, a bare structure of bones and ribs. The mother of Sabir asked her brother about the matter. Being unable to reply to his sister, maternal uncle asked nephew the reason. He was responded that he was not advised to himself to eat, except feeding and distributing to others. This reminds one

the story of Lakshmana of the Ramayana fame who did not take his meal in a similar way. The climax of obedience to elders can just be marked here. Feeling himself consoled, the maternal uncle informed his sister (Sabir's mother) that her son had reached a very high position in the spiritual world and hence he could do this. Among the Hindus also, those acquiring Siddhi, after certain *tap* ( तप ), care not even in the least for their physical health and try to elevate themselves to highest possible level of spiritual strength.

Among the three Ziyarat of all-India importance, the highest in order is treated to be Ajmer-Shareef, the two others include the Ziyarat of Nazamuddin Auliya in Delhi where Urs, etc. are held annually to remember Sabir's charismatic leadership. These personalities are known as "Wali" ( वली ) and the title and authority of *Walat* ( वलात ), i.e. being a Wali—a religious leader, is conferred upon them in a public function. It is said that when he was granted *Walat* in a meeting at Delhi, par chance, the light went off, as soon as he was to sign the document of acceptance. He showed a miraculous power and by whispering something with the air, he lighted his fingers that burnt and light came out of the hand. In another puff the whole of his arm started burning with enough light, in which the document was signed.

It is further believed that Sabir, during his lifetime, had to live for some period in the house of an oil-woman ( तेलवाँन ). Someday, when he went to the mosque for Namaz, the sacred Muslim prayer, he was refused admission there on account of his lower social position among the Muslims. He was ordered to keep himself away and stand near the shoes, due to his inferior status. He took it as something humiliating and criticised over the matter. He said that the mosque is a pious place meant for worship by common masses ( *खिदा का मक्कन* ) and insisted on performing Namaz in vain. In the meanwhile the whole mosque-building collapsed and all burned under it including Sabir Miyan. When the incident was known to oil-woman, she came there and praying in her heart dragged him catching his leg. Only he alone could come out alive from under the debris, all other having died there. There are many such references, which people believe about this Peer. It is said that after *Walat*, he did not like to live long. When he expired, people in his memory, erected a big shrine constructed there hence the fair of *Puran Kaliyar* is held.

The Muslims, particularly the Sunnis, mostly believing in the worship of Peers, come in large numbers to perform the Ziyarat, from almost all the parts of India and Pakistan. They have a deep faith in the Sabir's shrine and bow down before the Dargah, offering donations and charities there, either for further constructions in the area to faci-

litate stay of pilgrims or to the Sain (साई —the caretaker) or to the poor beggars. There is no restriction for non-Muslims to participate in it, but, it is rare that Hindus go either to worship or open a shop in the Mela or fair. With a view to maintaining sacredness of the place, it is customary that none keeps his shoes on the floor of the shrine and inside the Dargah-compound even, and would rather feel privileged in taking them in their hands. When they lie down or take rest inside the campus, they would keep the shoes on some cloth or in a bag, etc. but in no case, should touch the floor.

Due to heavy rush, it is difficult to enter inside and go round during the day-time. While entering the shrine proper, they would take small sugar-pills, prepared with the combination of cardamoms, known as the *Elaichidana* (इलायचीदाना), often of abnormal size and superior quality, believed to be the most important offering, along with the roses. They feel that it is the only pure thing which could be taken up for eating by the members of any community and that any adulteration in it must somehow or the other prove harmful to the sellers. Moreover, they do not enter inside bare-headed and must cover their heads by kerchief, etc. if not already putting on a cap. It is a symbol of regard to the Peer. They beg for boons and on accomplishment, bring a *Chadar* (चादर), a piece of cloth, its size and quality depending upon one's status and suitability of financial conditions, etc. and distribute alms in cash or kind. In the way through the first small room, they would go through the extracts from *Quran Sharcef* and other excerpts engraved on the walls and painted in Persian and Arabic languages. They feel blessed in touching the Quran shareef and would retouch the same fingers to their own foreheads or to their children. The devotees fear of the Peer's spiritual strength and feel that if he would look in a frowned mood, even the birds flying in the sky, passing over the Dargah shall stop and fall down dead. Use of wax-candles and *Agarbattis* (अगरबत्ती) is very common for lightning and sweet-smelling over the shrine proper, as a token of enlightenment, despite the heavy electrification of the tomb.

The shrine-proper is situated in the next room where people, bowing down, pass through an open window from the first small room, uttering and whispering some popular Persian hymns. The shrine is about 10' long, 3' wide and 2½' high which is kept covered with some red cloth, having ornamental art upon it. Taking rounds of it, as soon as the devotees reach the door for exit, a closed box inside and the other outside in the gallery, are kept with a long hole in their wooden covers. The priest of this shrine announce in loud voice reminding worshippers that none should please forget dropping money toward the

Nazre-Niazi and Chiragi ( नज्जे नियाज़ी और चिरागी ). Chiragi is for burning the Chirags (candle) all through the year to keep the place shining and Nazre-Niazi is the humble offering or the gift in regard.

The visitors and worshippers in thousands stay in the open compound in the nights. On this occasion Muslim ladies hardly observe any *Purdah*, though some orthodox ones still keep *Purdah* on their faces. They feel it a matter of privilege to wake for the whole night and keep busy in singing Qawwalis ( कव्वाली ) in praise and achievements of the Peer. It is a special feature that inside the Dargah compound, one could see hundreds of Qawal-parties from all corners of India, specially from Muslim regions. They bring with them Dholaks or pairs of Tablas, clad in a special dress with a typical cap on their heads, and sing on every yard's distance, along with the assistance of their own members. The favourite listeners gathered around them, resorting to the time-beats by their hand-clappings, and feel proud of listening to them for as long a time as possible. One can find so many tunes coming to his ears at the same time and so many versions of the same Qawali. Often the singers will, out of heat and passion, stand up, sing at the loudest pitch of voice as well as start dancing, their faces getting reddish and sufficiently inspired. The parties singing exactly in front of the shrine are, on frequent intervals, replaced by substitute parties who keep themselves ready beforehand to take to the assignment immediately, thus maintaining the system go on unbroken for any moment. The language of the Qawalis consists of reference to the appreciation of Miyan Sabir's charismatic adventures or to the works of Hazrat Mohammad Sahib or other Muslim prophets. The headlines often read as :

"Ho Kelojan Wali Saamya" or हो, कलियर वाले सांझा

"Aye Ham Sabh Ke Duran" or आय है सावित्र के दीवाने,

etc. and so on. The details also refer to Hindu gods like Hanuman, Ganga mata, (the Ganges) etc. which show that in the rural-folk of this area, are not as dogmatic as urban people. Here the cultural acculturation of Hindu-Muslim is well observed.

In lieu of their hard efforts in singing, the listeners offer token reward, generally in form of one-rupee note and the procedure is that the chips will be placed at the gate of the Dargah and some member from the Qawal-party would take it up, touch again to the floor of the shrine, retouch to his own forehead and then finally accept it with compliments to the payer, going to his place without turning his back toward the shrine's gate.

On the market side, mostly the Muslim shops can be seen, selling the food products like *Halwa-Puri*, meat and *Murg-Musallam*, *Pulao-*

*Briyani*, etc. and other things of normal use. The peculiar feature in this direction is the rows of unlimited number of tents for prostitutes (the singing and dancing girls), who come from almost all the parts of India and stay there for the whole period of the fair, i.e. about ten days. This accommodation is provided to them by the Mela Arrangement Committee against very nominal charge. These prostitutes (including too young girls to elderly ladies) are mainly the singing ones adopting to musical profession and generally not indulging in sexual activities openly. They serve the purpose of recreation and enjoyment to the visitors. Their parties comprise of two or three *Ustads* (the male music-masters as leaders) who often take to playing upon instruments, mostly the Harmonium or the *Sarangi* (the string instrument, played upon with the help of a bow as in case of Violin) and the pairs of *Tabla* or *Dholaks*. The *Sarangi* and *Tabla* have generally been replaced by Harmoniums and *Dholaks* and one can hear so many sweet tunes and ringing of *Ghunghrus* ( घुंघरू ) together, at every step's distance. There is no restriction at all for the visitors who very frankly enter the tents of their choice and ask the girls to start with their music.

Their dress consists of generally silken and ractive clothes, a good display of ornamental work and jewellery upon their bodies, bangles in their hands, *Sarees* and *Blouses* hair well-combed and faces well-decorated with cosmetics (creams and powders— प्रणार सामग्री ) and *Ghunghrus* in their feet. To make them appear more smart and active, the young girls specially prefer putting on Punjabi-style ladies dress, the *Zenana* long shirt and *Salwar*. Often they would pose themselves to be looking very beautiful, flatter to the senses of the visitors, often in a drunken condition, who as a token of pleasure and appreciation of their songs and beauty, expressing by nodding their heads and passing some remarks, offer tips generally in one-rupee note denomination. All this money is deposited with the leader of the singing-party. In between, the elderly prostitutes offer a betel to the distinguished guests, if any. At certain moments the gathering touches the climax and even hundred of rupees within a few minutes are collected. Much depends upon the reputation, make-up and performance of dance. The style of music has recently been very much changed. Previously these people were thought to be the experts of Indian classical music and some very standard and rare items in vocal music, specially the complicated *Ragas* and *Ragins*, were presented by the *Ustads* and *Tabla*-players, known as the

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## THREE MIZO FOLKTALES

### 1. Chhura and Phungpui-nu

Long long ago, there were two persons named Chhura<sup>1</sup> alias CHHURBURA and NAHAIA who were very intimate friends. The latter was lazier than the former. Chhura was simple-minded and mentally a bit deficient man, but hard working, honest and sincere than Nahaia. Nahaia used to cheat Chhura.

One year both of them had lo<sup>2</sup> contiguous to one another. The site of their lo was a slope: the upper portion of the area was Chhura's lo and the lower portion was Nahaia's lo. Just before the harvest time, a large number of parrots used to come and eat the ripening paddy of their lo. Every day both of them went there to protect their paddy from being eaten by the parrots. One day, a large number of parrots took rest on the branches of a huge tree standing magnificently just below Nahaia's lo, waiting for him to leave. With the intention of frightening and driving away the parrots from there, Nahaia took a big stone in his hand and threw it on that large tree with all his strength. The stone hit on the large tree trunk which was hollow and to his horror a huge frightful "Phungpui-nu"<sup>3</sup> suddenly shouted from the hole of the tree trunk with her harsh voice, "who was that? Shall I come out?" Nahaia was terrified and shocked at the unexpected nightmare and ran away from there as fast as he could. He dared not go to lo again since then. But how to protect his paddy from the parrots? He was thinking hard to find a way out.

At last he had an idea. He said to Chhura, "Chhura, let us exchange our work, you go to my lo to protect my paddy and I will go yours to do the same." Chhura unhesitatingly agreed to the sugges-

- 1 Chhura - the name of a famous character in Lushai folk-lore noted for his stupidity and diligence. His name is frequently coupled with that of his friend Naa or Nahia. Nahaia is noted for his laziness and craftiness.
- 2 lo - a Lushai cultivation of jhoom; (sometimes also referring to crops growing there), a clearing in the forest used for agricultural purposes especially for the growing of rice, etc; a farm; a cultivated field.
- 3 Phungpui-nu - Phungpui - a ghost a bogey, a spook, an aghast, a genie, a goblin (generally regarded as female by Lushais); Nu - a mother, a feminine suffix.



tion. Nahaia did not want to tell him the presence of the Phungpui-nu in his lo, but simply advised him, "Chhura, you will find a large tree standing just below my lo. A large number of parrots used to rest on its branches. Do not forget to throw stones occasionally on that tree." So, Chhura went to the lo of Nahaia. He picked up a big stone in his hand and threw it with all his strength on that large tree. Phungpui-nu shouted loudly, "who was that? Shall I come out?" Chhura was not easily frightened and shouted back at her, "you come out if you like. What do I care for you, even if you are as big as a full-grown gaval?"<sup>4</sup> Then Phungpui-nu continued "you might break the heads of my children." Chhura bluntly replied, "I don't care even if the heads of all your children are broken into pieces." Nahaia was really afraid of Phungpui-nu, but not Chhura. Chhura wanted to capture her alive and he made a plan. He made a swing inside the thlam<sup>5</sup> and used to enjoy himself swinging there. Phungpui-nu saw him do it from the tree and was very anxious to try and swing there too. One day Chhura made a hole in the roof of the thlam secretly and concealed himself on top of the roof by covering himself with a black cloth. Phungpui-nu stealthily came out of her hole to see whether Chhura was still there in the thlam but could not find him. So without any suspicion that Chhura might still be there and thinking that Chhura had already gone home, she went to the thlam and enjoyed herself happily in the swing, singing a song. At that very moment, Chhura suddenly caught hold of her hair from the roof. Phungpui-nu started shouting and struggling hard to run away, but Chhura would not release his hold on her hair and said "now, I shall bind you up very firmly with a rope. I shall take you home and all the children of the village will play and make fun of you. They will drag you all over the place." That really frightened Phungpui-nu and she felt so sad that she shed tears and cried. Since Chhura stubbornly refused to release her, she did not know what to do. Then she said, "Chhura, I shall pay you ransom for my freedom?" Chhura asked, "with what?" She replied, "with an axe which can cut out a bees' nest from a tree." Chhura said, "will it be able to cut out the bees' nest from the tree by itself?" Phungpui-nu explained, "no, it will require your strength." Chhura refused to accept saying, "I too have got such an axe." Phungpui-nu then made another offer and said, "I will give you a hoe which can cut the grass in the lo." Chhura asked her, "will it be able to cut the grass in the lo by itself or it will require some effort on my part?" She explained,

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4 gaval a domestic animal.

5 thlam a phoom house, a house built on the phoom or cultivated clearing in the forest used as a shelter or temporary home and also as a barn.

"of course, it will require your strength." Again Chhura did not accept the ransom offered and said, "I too have got such a hoe." Phungpui-nu made many other offers, but Chhura was neither willing to accept them and nor would he release his hold on her hair. At last, she decided to offer him her most valuable thing and said, "I will give you my Seki-buh-chhuak"<sup>6</sup> Chhura wanted to know what it was and asked her, "tell me what is and what it can do?" Phungpui-nu explained, "if you sing a song saying, 'Oh! thou Sekibuh-chhuak! let meat come out from the upper portion, let beer come out from the lower portion', meat will come out by itself from the upper portion and beer will come out by itself from the lower portion as much as you like." So, Chhura realised what the Seki-buh chhuak could do and agreed to accept the ransom offer. He at last released Phungpui-nu.

The following day, Chhura went to the house of Phungpui-nu i.e. the hole in the tree in Nahua's lo to take possession of the valuable Seki-buh chhuak from her. But Phungpui-nu was out in the jungle in search of flowers and fruits of the wild plantain for feeding her children. He searched the house for the Seki-buh chhuak and found it near the outer bed of Phungpui-nu. He took it, and tried as to whether anything could actually come out of it by itself as explained by Phungpui-nu. But to his disappointment, only the boiled husk of gram came out of it instead of meat and beer. He searched the house again and found another Seki-buh chhuak near the inner bed of Phungpui-nu. He took it and tested again singing, 'Oh! thou Seki-buh chhuak! let meat come out from the upper portion, let beer come out from the lower portion.' This time, meat came out of the upper portion and beer came out of the lower portion. Chhura was very happy and kept the second Seki-buh chhuak with him. But before he left the house of the Phungpui-nu, he forced open the mouths of all her children and filled them with ash. Further he pushed a skewer<sup>7</sup> through their throats, hung them up in a row near the fire place to dry and left the house with the second Seki-buh chhuak.

Phungpui-nu came home in the evening and called her children from outside, "here, I have brought the fruits of the plantain for you," and showed the fruits of the plantain from a distance to her children. But no response came from the house and it was all quite. When she entered the house, she thought that her children were eating her yeast and she became angry. But when she looked at them closely, she found that they were all dead. She shed tears and wept singing a song —

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6. Seki-buh-chhuak -a fabled horn from which the owner could obtain anything he desired.

7. skewer--sharp bamboo stick for drying meat near the fire.

"While I was out, down the river,  
in search of fruits of the plantain;  
all my children were killed: and some one  
hung up my children near the fire."

Nahaia came to know about the whole incident and wanted to have the Seki-buh chhuak from Chhura. He was a lazy man and wanted to get things without spending his energy. One day, he advised Chhura, "Chhura, do not forget to bring out your Seki-buh-chhuak along with you at the first instance in case of a fire". After sometime, Nahaia made a plan. The steps leading to Chhura's house were made of dried woods. Nahaia asked him to remove these and replace them by new ones. So, both of them replaced the woods by green tree trunks. The bark of these tree trunks were removed by Nahaia so as to make them slippery. That night, Nahaia made a big fire by burning a large basket just in front of Chhura's house and shouted loudly, "Chhura, Chhura, fire! fire! fire! A house is burning. Bring out your Seki-buh chhuak quickly." Chhura wanted to save his Seki-buh chhuak from fire and picked it up, and started running out of his house. He fell off his steps as they were slippery and threw away his Seki-buh chhuak. Immediately Nahaia picked it up and gladly said, "Nahaia will get what Chhura did not like". So, Nahaia got the valuable Seki-buh-chhuak.

One day, Chhura tried to cheat Nahaia in the same manner with a hope to get back his valuable Seki-buh chhuak from Nahaia. But Nahaia, instead of taking the Seki-buh chhuak, brought out a hard stone used for grinding salt with, and when he fell off the steps, he threw it away with all his strength and hit the leg of Chhura. Chhura felt the pain very much, but he picked up the stone reluctantly and said, "Chhura will get what Nahaia did not like."

## 2. Chhura's visit to Mawngping

Once upon a time, Chhura paid a visit to one village called 'Mawngping. This village was not easily accessible. The people living therein hardly knew about the outside world for they were never in contact with anything outside their village. As a result of this, the villagers were not intelligent and could easily be fooled. Even Chhura found it easy to deal with them. So he cheated them any way he liked and killed many of their children. After sometime, they became very angry with him and decided to take revenge by killing him for the murder of their children. Sensing the danger, Chhura ran

away; but they pursued him to the jungle with the intention of killing him. He was much faster than his pursuers. But he felt tired and decided to hide himself behind an uprooted tree. His enemies could trace his foot-steps right upto that uprooted tree where his footprints suddenly ended mysteriously. They were all armed with their best weapons such as *daos*<sup>1</sup> and spears. They were sitting on that uprooted tree taking rest while discussing as to in which direction Chhura might have gone. They did not know that he was hiding just behind that tree, a few inches below them. One of the pursuers, who happened to be a 'Pawi',<sup>2</sup> was playing and hitting that fallen tree with his spear while sitting there. Chhura could see all this from his place of hiding and was afraid of the spear. He suddenly spoke and startled them by saying, "you Pawi, don't do like that lest you might hurt me with that spear!" Thus, Chhura foolishly surprised them by revealing his hiding place. But Chhura got up in a flash and started running again before they could do anything. His enemies pursued him again with fresh energy. At last, Chhura climbed up to the top of a very high tree. None of his pursuers could climb to that height. They, therefore, decided to uproot the tree. They brought an axe. Chhura knew that they were going to uproot the tree where he was safe and that he would be crushed into pieces after sometime. He called them and said, "wait a minute. Let me come down first and I would help you in uprooting this tree." So, they let him come down and together with him, they uprooted the tree with his help! However, after uprooting the tree and before he could start running again, they caught him and put him inside a large basket. They tied a rope on the basket and hang him high up in the branch of a tree just above a deep pool of water so that he would not be able to escape. Now, there was no chance of escape for him. The only material he had with him with which he could make good his escape was a very blunt knife. He was now thinking of the agony of a slow death by starvation in a tight basket where he could not move freely. Thus he was left alone there helplessly.

After some time, as luck was with him again, a trader with lot of necklaces who happened to be another Pawi was passing through that place on his way and found Chhura. Chhura called him and the trader stopped to see what it was all about. Chhura, instead of requesting the stranger to set him free and save his life in a polite way, threatened him and said, "you Pawi! you must release me quickly, otherwise I would kill you with this knife" and flashed his knife

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1. *daos*—A large knife with a wooden handle used for cutting wood etc.

2. *Pawi*—a name embracing all the tribes (such as Chins, Lakhers, Fansis, etc.) who do not wear their hair knot at the back of the head as the Lushais do.

menacingly. The trader was afraid of Chhura. He wanted to kill him with knife. Therefore, agreed to release him. He climbed up the tree and set free Chhura. After he was saved and came down to the ground, Chhura said to the trader, "my friend, why don't you too go up inside the basket and enjoy the fun? It is a very pleasant view. You can see everything up here and enjoy the cool breeze high up in the air." The trader believed him and after leaving all his necklaces on the ground, he climbed up the tree and got inside the basket without any hesitation. Then and there, Chhura chopped off the rope at once with his knife. The basket with the Pawi trader inside it fell down in the deep pool of water down below and he was drowned. Chhura took possession of all the necklaces and other valuable properties and went back to the Mawngping village.

The following morning, the villagers were amazed at the sight of Chhura who was back to the village alive! They could not believe their eyes. They wondered as to how he could escape safely from that ordeal and they all came to see him. Not only that, all the highly valuable necklaces he brought with him added to their surprise. They asked him how he could escape and from where he got all those things. Chhura replied, "there is a place full of trees of necklaces and other valuable treasures just below that pool over which you hang me up. I was alone and could not bring all that were available there." The villagers grew anxious to get the necklaces and asked him, "Alas! please tell us how to go there. We shall go there and bring those treasures for ourselves too." Then Chhura replied, "alright, first of all every one of you should tie an empty earthen pot around his waist. Then all of you should jump down on that deep pool of the river, shouting loudly, 'good fortunes, good fortunes' and you will find the way and may bring necklaces and other treasures as much as you like."

All the able-bodied males of the village enthusiastically thus set out. All of them tied empty earthen pots around their waists and jumped down inside the deep pool of water shouting, "good fortunes, good fortunes" as advised by Chhura. As soon as they got submerged inside the pool, the empty pots around their waists were immediately filled up with water producing some gurgling sounds. As a result, none of them could swim nor float in the water and they were all drowned!

Then Chhura went back to the village and told the women-folks at home, "your husbands found innumerable fortunes and you are now all rich. They brought so much with them that felt tired and needed help from home. Run immediately to the jungle to help them." Thereafter all the women went to the jungle happily to help their husbands. But

since they were all drowned in the river, the women found none of their husbands. They were disappointed. They went back home without any news of their husbands, not to speak of the fortunes.

Thus Chhura cheated them all.

### 3. Chhura and the lost melody

Once upon a time Chhura went to a village which he had not visited for a long time. While he was there he heard one of the young men whistling a tune. This tune took Chhura's fancy for he had never before heard any one whistling. He went to the youngman when there was no one else around and asked him how much money he wanted for his music. The young man agreed to sell it for the price of three large gayals and Chhura was delighted to buy the tune. He became very happy, whistling all the time while he was in that village so that he might not forget the tune. After a few days he had to return home. He went on whistling his precious tune in the way. By and by, as he began to think of his village and of a dispute which he had there with one of his neighbours, he unconsciously stopped whistling. He went on in this way for some time until suddenly he realised that he has forgotten the tune. Vainly he tried to bring it back again, vainly he attempted this sound and that, hoping that he would hit upon the tune again. But nothing that he could do was of any use. He then began retracing his steps and looking along the path he had come, and in the jungle on both sides, in search of what he had lost. Soon there came along a Pawi man who asked him what he was looking for. "if I knew that" was the reply, "I would not be wasting my time and troubling myself to look for it". The Pawi wanted to help Chhura and yet he did not know what in the world to look for. He began looking about him in sympathy with Chhura, but he could find nothing. At last he began whistling to himself as though to say, "this is indeed a hopeless task." But as soon as Chhura heard him whistling he shouted, "that is what I have been looking for all the time. That is what I lost." And he began whistling the tune again and went happily on his way.

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## THE HOLY SNAKE AND A TRUE MOTHER

There was a Patel (a man of the peasant community). He solemnised his marriage and the bride came to his house. Both of them started living as husband and wife. Two years passed and his wife became pregnant. She completed nine months and nine days of her pregnancy. Then she gave birth to a girl. The newly-born started growing continuously and very fast. When the child was five years of age, she lost her mother. Her father remarried and took a woman as his wife who was a sister of the dead mother of the girl. This woman or the maternal aunt of the girl also became pregnant soon and gave birth to a girl after nine months and nine days of her pregnancy.

The woman started loving her newborn and hating the step-daughter. The older girl was thus placed in a miserable condition. Consequently she began to lose weight. The woman fed own child with delicious food hence growth of her body was rapid, and though she was younger, she looked as tall as her older sister. The older girl had to go out in the fields for grazing cattle everyday. Her stepmother gave her only bread made of Jowar (a coarse corn) flour mixed with cowdung, while her own child was fed with bread made of wheat flour. The poor older girl rested the cattle under a banyan tree and ate her lunch of the sordid. She would eat only the upper layer of the bread which was made of flour and would put aside the dung part of the bread. She passed her days in this monotony and misery.

Then came the rainy season. She sowed a melon-seed. The seed sprouted into a creeper which spread fast and bore fruit. The girl then started eating her bread with these melons during her lunch. Now her hunger was satisfied and her body began to fill. She looked as if she was growing out of her clothes. This physical growth was noticed by her stepmother. She pondered in her mind 'what has happened to this girl? Formerly she was very thin, and now what makes her so flashy! I am feeding my own girl with ghee and jaggery and to her I give only bread made of coarse corn mixed with cowdung. Yet why is her body filling better than my own child? The mystery baffled her. And she hit upon a stratagem. She sent her own girl to spy upon the older one

when the latter took the cattle out for grazing. The younger girl hid herself in a suitable spot and noticed that her stepsister was lurching on melons and the given bread. She immediately hied home and reported to her mother 'O, mother, mother, a melon-creeper has plenty of melons and I found the older sister eating those melons.' The next day the woman herself followed the older girl stealthily. When the girl was going to graze the cattle on a hill, finishing her lunch, the stepmother pulled out the melon-creeper. Nextday the girl found that somebody had rooted out her melon-creeper.

She was again in trouble. She started losing her weight as she had to remain underfed everyday. In the meantime it was so happened that a snake-charmer who was getting livelihood by wandering from place to place was running after a snake to catch hold of it. The snake ran. The snake-charmer followed closed behind. The snake atlast came to the older girl who was grazing her cattle and said 'O, good girl, kindly hide me under your long braided hair, because a snake-charmer is chasing to catch me. If, approaching, he asks about me, you please tell him that the snake has gone past you.' The girl hid the snake. The snake-charmer too approached the girl immediately after and asked her if she has seen a snake passing by. The girl replied 'O, yes, a snake had just glided past.' When she saw that the snake-charmer had gone away far, she asked the snake to come out of her braided hair. The snake came out and said 'O, girl! please let me know whatever you want. Ask for anything you desire. I am very much pleased with you.' The girl replied 'O holy one, I do not want anything. But I am unhappy in one point. I lost my mother when I was only five years old and now my stepmother treats me very badly. She feeds me on dung mixed bread, and it makes me miserable to stuff my belly with this food.' Then the snake said to the girl 'O, good girl! Is this the matter? Let me arrange for your food and water. You fold fingers of your right hand into a fist. Then open the fist when you require food and water.' The girl did as she was told and she found both food and water. The snake told her that whenever she felt hungry she should do likewise and she would get food and water of her desire. He also said, "Whenever you are in trouble you utter the words 'O, holy snake' loudly and I shall appear soon and free you from the trouble." Saying so the snake glided away. After this boon the girl was a happy creature going about her work in a gay mood, light of step and sweet of voice. Her two dire needs—food and water—were at her back and call. Days and months passed in happiness for the girl.

Now it so happened that a prince who was out hunting game



climbed a hill with a bow in one hand and a flute in the other. He killed a hare here and a wild cow there, a pig this hour and a fox like animal (Batayr) the next. When he came to the top of the hill in such a joyous mood, he heard a girl's voice full of song. She was the same older daughter of that peasant, who had become flashy and full of figure by eating desired food everyday. At the sight of the girl the prince forgot all about the game and gazed at her with a steady look. The girl too responded and gazed back at him. She was so much charmed with him that she forgot all else, and returned home absent-minded, collecting her grazing cattle in this mood. She could not sleep the whole night. Nextday she took the cattle to the same place and sat on a stone, waiting for the person. She was still wrapped up in the thoughts of yesterday. Then suddenly she felt drowsy and fell into gentle sleep. While she slept the sleep of pleasant memories, first of her right hand opened and water began to flow out of it.

The prince was also wandering in search of the girl at that time. When he was roaming on the peak of a hill, he felt very thirsty. But how was it possible to get water on this peak? He resolved to get water by any means and started a vigorous search for it. When he was proceeding further up he found a kite flying high in the sky. He followed the direction of that kite and presently he came upon a stream of clear water. He drank to his heart's content. When his thirst was quenched and he was his normal self, he just wondered about how a stream could be found so high on a hill. He followed the flow upward and after some distance he saw that the stream was coming out of the palm of a sleeping girl.

The girl was recognized by him immediately. She was the same girl to whom he was in search of. He was pleased with himself and began to play tune on his flute. The girl did not wake up with this song. So he pelted a stone at her. The rattle of the stone awakened her. For a moment she was startled at the sight of the prince. Then immediately she folded her fingers. The flow of water ceased. She saw that the prince was in a gay mood and was playing on his flute. Both stared at each other for sometime. Then they drew near and began to ask each other questions. The prince had seen the water-flow out of her palm before some moments with his own eyes, which, made him think that the girl was not an ordinary one. Atlast he begged for her hand in marriage. She agreed and gave him the name of her village and of her father both. Nextday the prince went to her father's home and declared his intention before him to marry his older girl. The stepmother thought that the prince should be offered her own girl. Thinking for a while the parent asked the prince to marry

their younger girl. But the prince was very firm in his resolve to marry his beloved one. The father atlast agreed to the desire of the prince. And the prince then returned to his palace for making marriage preparations.

Here the aunt of the girl started her own web of schemes in favour of her girl. She sent for the older one for a pre-marriage ceremony called 'Pithi' in which the bride is required to seat on a wooden stool for application of auspicious paste on her body. She dug a deep pit which she concealed by spreading a mat on it and then putting a stool on it. The girl was asked then to sit on that stool for the ceremony. No sooner did the girl sit on the stool than she fell into the pit. But while falling she uttered 'O, holy snake.' The snake appeared on the spot, caught falling into the pit and set her on the stool. The aunt could not understand what had happened. Then she finished the 'Pithi' ceremony, bathed her and led her to the family God. She played the same trick on the day of Mandap, i.e. canopying the place of marriage. She asked the girl to seat on the stool for eating. As soon as she started eating, the underspread was shaken and she fell into the hidden pit. She called aloud again the same words hence the snake resaved her.

Then at night the marriage party from bridegroom's place arrived. The party was well received. Both the parties of the bride and the bridegroom made merry the whole night. The time fixed for performing marriage ceremony was early morning. The aunt again played the same mischief. She asked the bride to bathe on a stool over a hidden pit. The bride again fell into the pit but she repeated the same words while falling so that she was again saved by the snake. Knowing that she failed again and again in her intrigues the poor aunt atlast had to adorn the bride for final ceremony. She provided her with ornaments like armlet, bangles, nose-ring, etc., and got her married. The prince and the girl thus were married happily atlast and returned to the prince's palace riding on an elephant. The girl was very happy.

Some time passed and she conceived. After nine months and nine days she gave birth to a baby prince. When this prince was some months old, the whole family came to the (Patel's house) as his guests. The prince went back after a couple of days, but the baby prince and the mother stayed behind. During the days of her stay the older girl was taken by the aunt with her for fetching water from a well. When she was busy drawing water from the well the aunt pushed her into the well. She recalled and uttered the magic words 'O, holy snake' while falling. Hence she was resaved again by the snake. She now lived in the well with the snake.

After some days when the father of the baby prince came to take his family back, the aunt sent her own veiled daughter and the child with him. The king took both of them to his lonely palace and they started living together. The baby prince started crying in his palace. All the efforts to make him quiet were fruitless. At last the true mother of the baby prince came to the palace after midnight, riding on the snake. At that time gates of the palace were closed. The mother addressing the gates recited :

“O, gate ! Please open,  
The mistress of this palace has come.”

No sooner were the words completed then the gates opened. She came inside. Suddenly a horse started whinnying when she entered inside. She recited to the horse :

“O fine horse, be quiet,  
The mistress of the palace has come ”

Hearing this couplet the horse became quiet. But by the time the horse stopped his whinny, a cow started lowing. She spoke again a couplet addressing the cow and calmed her. Then she stepped into the room of the palace where her baby prince was lying lonely and was crying in dark. There was complete darkness in the room and no one was there to look after her baby prince. She recited a couplet to oil-lamps :

“O, lamps of the palace, be lit ! be lit ! now,  
The mistress of the palace has come.”

At these words the lamps were aflame soon. She took the prince on her lap and started to feed him with her breasts' milk. As his hunger satisfied and also felt the magic touch of his mother the prince stopped crying. She then put him to sleep and started to repair to her abode in the well. She recited a couplet addressing the lamps :

“O lamps, now be lightless again,  
The mistress of the palace goes back.”

The lamps were soon extinguished. She closed the doors of the palace, kept the cow and the horse quiet and also closed the gates with the magic couplet, addressing each one of them. Then she returned to her abode in the well. This became a daily routine for her.

Days passed in this way. But once it so happened that the father of the baby prince suspected, and caught her on the spot. He questioned her under threat of a naked sword as to who she was. She replied in the darkness that she was the woman with whom he was married. The king recognized her voice and asked her to solve the mystery. She narrated the whole story and informed him that the woman who was now in the palace in her place was her step-sister. She added that she was visiting this palace daily at night just to feed her baby prince. This type of arrangement was made possible by a holy and kindly snake who had forbidden her to tell this secret to anybody. If she disclosed this secret to anyone, the snake would die immediately. She then informed him with a heavy voice that she had disclosed the secret to him, under threat of death, but she was sure that her holy and fatherly snake must have been dead outside the palace. Both of them came out of the palace, and they found the deadbody of the snake. They took the deadbody with them and came into the palace.

The next day the prince inflicted the severest punishment on his pseudo wife. Her head was shaven, she was smeared with hot lime, and was banished out of the kingdom. She was made to ride on a donkey heaped with all the imaginable indignities. After banishing her they put up a memorial stone in honour of the kindly snake. Thus the whole family was united again and lived happily even after.

*Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad.*

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*From page 438*

#### PIRAN—KALIYAR AT SAHARANPUR

his separate style of performing Kaharva ( कहरवा ) Tal. Moreover, Meerasis ( मीरासा ). It was said, for example, that every Meerasi had a very common change instead can be noticed that there is a deviation from classical music, which can be understood and really relished by hardly a few interested in it and general diversion of tendency to film-music of a very popular type, understandable by a common man in the street. Now actually the object of the musician is money-earning, and instantaneous pleasure instead of expression of some real art in music.

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### *Just Published*

**UTTAR RARER LOKSANGEET** (In Bengali, Folksongs of North Rarh Banga i.e. Kandi of Murshidabad district, Katwa of Burdwan district & the whole area of Birbhum District) by Dilip Mukhopadhyaya. Foreword—H. Banerjee, Former Vice-chancellor of the Rabindra Bharati Univ., Introduction by Tarasankar Bandyopadhyay & Preface Sankar Sen Gupta. To be had at Indian Publications, Calcutta-1. Demy 8vo, 160 pages. Rs. 6.00



## REVIEWS OF BOOKS

**MALAVI LOK-SAHITYA** (In Hindi, Folk Literature of Malwa) by Dr. Shyam Parmar, Allahabad, Hindusthan Akademi, 1969, Rs 20 00.

The author of the book under review is well-known to the students of folklore for his valuable contribution in this field. The book under review is presented in an attractive manner with a very lucid language but without loss of scientific precision. It has an introduction where the author has tried to explain as to what he means by the word 'lok' (or folk), the Indian synonym of the word, and other details with regard to the scope of folklore study in India. Besides, the book has seven chapters with appendices where the author has discussed in length the language and dialects of the people of Malwa, their religions, fairs, gods and goddesses, together with entertainment sides like songs, dances and dramas and the kind. In all the chapters there are general discussions of the development of folklore which are supported by the quotations. Naturally, the book will certainly be very useful for everybody wished to get accustomed with facts about Malavi folklore.

Here the author makes a good case for the general assumption that folk language and dialects is embeded within a general capacity of human thought (if we express it in this crude way). It would be said that different remarks in the book show that the author's ideas are developing towards a greater appreciation of the role of lexical semantics and that he has a clear understanding of what is folklore, and what is not; and what is the influence of folk speech and dialects. Irrespective of whether one agrees or disagrees with the particular interpretation, one finds the examples and the discussions always interesting. It aims to elaborate the formal properties of any human language and in this regard the field of study of the author is in infancy: it is only recently that the possibility of such an enterprise is getting developed. Let us mention in this connection that the idea of language being a speciestypical innate ability of man will need, among other things, a terminological specifications (what do we mean by 'innate', what is supposed to be innate or the categories themselves, or abstractive capacities to establish the categories etc.). After all the rationalist versus empiricist has only a short tradition in linguistics. However, it should not be forgotten that the book is written by a competent scholar who is very much conscious in arriving at a critical synthesis of future studies. Although the text is provided with notes, he has also provided with a select bibliography. The graphical documentations and charts are important since they serve to illustrate the text adequately. All these have given the book a high technical and esthetical standard.

Dr B N. Shastri

## EDITORIAL

A thorough comparison of the principals of standards of the folk and elite ways of life is essential for any one who really wants to understand the new things which elite has brought folk. The old truth that everything is learned through comparison fully applies in this case. The border lines between the folk and elite everyday matters recede into the background, while the main, important features emerge in bold relief. There is indeed a great interest abroad in Indian people and their way of life. Visitors ask endless questions. This interest is not just idle curiosity.

We are witness of and participants in a deep going process in which masses of the people are taken marching part. As a result people's horizons and aspirations have become unbelievably broader. Now ordinary people are entitled to take up basic problem of the society on their shoulder for a better result. In a society split into antagonistic classes in which individuals confront one another as private property owners, a universal clash of interest becomes a law, the psychology and ideology of individualism are a natural extension of interest of the elites and are regarded by the elite as individual freedom. Under socialistic pattern of society of New India the specific features of personal interests are by no means destroyed. Here human relations, theoretically, are based on comradely mutual assistance, and internationalism and free activity of the individual for the common good acquires the nature of a law and is regarded as one of the main merits of the individual, but practically, these are no longer in practice in general. Even though we are united. Our unity rests on general principles arrived not only at our programme of building a new society but also by tradition. So whenever we see that our way of life is characterised by fundamentally new forms and standards of human relationship we are not surprised. At the same time, it means conscious preservation and development of mankind's achievements. Under this condition, science, literature and art become the property of people, it inherits and develops the finest traditions of human spirit—love, friendship, fidelity, creative approach to work and so on. It goes without saying that we have our difficulties and problems, and it would be strange if we did not. In general, there is no such society without problems. It is impossible to build new society and new relations without making mistakes and correcting them. Our country is trying to raise ourselves to a qualitative stage of development where the masses of people is being guided by a recognition of the fact that their way of life is a new way of life, that they are building their own society giving due respect to their own tradition.

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